My Desire

By The Author Of The

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

GIFT OF

Mrs. George Papashvily

M E Bramble

M E Scatchard

219 Harris St

Germantown.

by 1890

MY DESIRE.

Copyright 1879.
By Robert Carter & Brothers.

CAMBRIDGE:
PRESS OF
JOHN WILSON AND SON.

ST. JOHNLAND
STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY,
SUFFOLK CO., N. Y.

GIFT

955
W28Y
vol.1

NOTE.

Some readers will perhaps be more interested in the following story if they know that it is true. All the great points of the history, the whole framework of facts, are life-work and not fancy. Life-work, lived through so long ago that there is nobody now to be hurt by the telling.

S. Warner.

Martlaer's Rock,
April, 1879.

052

MY DESIRE.

Chesterfield, Sep. 1, 18—.

WHEN one is sixteen or seventeen, people tell one, "My dear, life is before you"; somebody said so to me yesterday. What do they mean? It seems to me life is behind me, as well as before. How many years I can look back to already. It seems very far away, that I was playing in these fields about the house, a little bit of a child; bundled up in a shawl pinned round me, something after the fashion of an old Roman tunic, I fancy. Olive and I together; but oftenest I was alone, and Olive used to be sent out to fetch me in. That was when mother was here, to look after us both. It seems very long ago. Then I remember a stretch of time that followed, when we were at school in Boston, both of us, and making visits now and then to our distant relation, Mrs. Bowdoin. Those school days look like an immense and somewhat desert tract to me now, marked in the middle by the changes that made us orphans.

Then, just before Caroline was married, we came

home; so that really in all my life I have seen very little of my sister Caroline. Since then Olive and I have lived here, in the dear old house, taking care of grandmother and of each other. Nothing else to take care of, for of course the farm is off our hands; hired out. I wonder how well we have done what we have done? Such a little work, for two people, ought to be well cared for. And yet, I don't know. *Is* it a little work, just to take care of oneself, I am questioning? For really it comes to that. I do not take care of Olive; and she does not take care of me, I think; though we do both look after grandmother. I am afraid these two years since we have been at home have been stand-still years for me. And surely it cannot be right to stand still ever. One ought to be growing, in mind and spirit. Years are not given one for nothing. But really, I am afraid I do nothing but enjoy myself. I do *that;* if that were a means of growth, I should be making capital progress. Such weather! How can one help but enjoy, something or other, all day long? There is a glitter on the leaves, and the shady side of the chestnuts is rich and deep, and little racks of clouds lie along on the blue, looking as idle as I feel; but of course nothing in nature is idle. And the air is full of life; crickets and grasshoppers and katydids, and now and then the song of a locust and the whistle of the oriole. I love that whistle; but I have not heard it now for several days; I am afraid the oriole is gone south. It is just a pleasure to live

such weather. They say, my life is before me, and I am sure it is behind me as well; but what I am vividly conscious of is the intense life of the present. There is a certain undefined sense of powers and possibilities, latent in me now, some day to come to light, which is of itself life and pleasure O sunlight and crickets! you are not happier than I am. No doubt my appreciation of all this is enhanced just now by Caroline's invitation. Caroline has sent for me to come and make her a visit, and I am going. And I think I will keep a record of things that strike me, because I might be glad of it afterwards. Isn't this one way of holding fast pleasant things?

Olive came in when I had written just so much, with a pan of apples.

"What is going on?" I asked.

"Pies."

"Pies! I had forgotten all about them. I'll do that; and you can go on with your mat. You won't have it done, if you don't make haste; and then it would have to go by express and that would cost money."

I took the pan of apples and began to pare them; but Olive sat and looked at me.

"What have you got to wear?" she said. "If you go."

"Not much. I don't want much."

"Philadelphia is not like Chesterfield."

"I don't think it, for one moment. I have read a few books in my life."

"Then I come back to my question. What *are* you going to wear?"

"You do not want an answer, I suppose?"

"On the contrary. I do."

"I can give it. I have thought on the subject. To travel in, I shall wear my brown merino. For afternoons, my blue and my buff muslins, and if it grows cool, my black silk."

"What for morning?"

"Nothing particular," said I laughing.

"It is not a thing to laugh about. If you go to stay with Caroline, you must be respectable."

"I can do nothing but laugh, I am so glad."

"But that is childish. Your silk is very shabby, Desire."

"I am sadly afraid that is true."

"Muslins are too cold for this time of year."

"Philadelphia is not like Chesterfield, as you remarked. It is further south, by several degrees."

"And October is later than September, by several weeks."

"Then I will wear my black silk all the time."

"It would not stand very much more wear."

"It must, I guess."

"It would be better not to go at all, than to go and have Caroline ashamed of you."

"Caroline has seen me before. She knows what she has to expect."

"But other people?—"

"What other people?"

"Caroline's society friends, and Mr. Birkenstall's

friends, and *their* friends. Do you think, child, Philadelphia is a desert? Do you think Caroline lives in her house alone?"

"No—" said I; "but I am going to see Caroline, and nobody else."

"You cannot escape seeing somebody else."

"I am not going to try to escape. I'll see all I can."

"In that old black silk?"

"I will appear only by night, when a black silk does not shew what it is like. Or I will come out only by day, when I have shawl and hat on."

"Your hat too!" said Olive.

"My hat is quite respectable. It does not pretend to much, but it *is* all it pretends to be. Just a plain straw hat with a black ribband, and it fits me."

"I don't think you have the least notion of what the world is," said my sister.

"No. That is what I am going to get. What is it, the world?"

"Critical."

"So am I. Two can play at that game."

"Don't be foolish. One may find fault with the world, and the world does not feel it; but if the world finds fault with *one*—"

"You think one cannot stand it. Well, we shall see." I was paring apples very fast, and Olive sat and looked at me, with a dissatisfied face.

"You are just a child!" she said.

"Happy condition. I'll keep so as long as I can."

"Or else you would understand me better. Do you know what I would do, if I were in your place?"

"No; nor you neither," I returned laughing.

"Rather than go to Philadelphia *so*, with absolutely nothing fit to put on, morning, noon, or night; nothing fit to see company in, at home or abroad; nothing proper to go with Caroline anywhere;—I would stay at home."

"I thought you were going to say that."

"I really think it would be better."

"In that Swedish story of Miss Carlen's, the mother sold her cow to buy proper things for her daughter to wear. I observe you do not propose to part with old Grumble on my account."

"Grumble!" echoed my sister. "She is the only cow we have."

Olive looked so grave, and I felt so light-hearted, I could do nothing but throw down my knife and my apples and laugh. She remarked that there was nothing to be done with me, looked at me a little keenly, I thought, and finally went off. I finished my apples and went up stairs to put my things together. There is no doubt they were very few and very inconsiderable, to say the least; in fact we have no trunk small enough to hold them. Olive brought me her red shawl, which she wanted to put in; and her best collar and cuffs; but I would not take them. Why should I? I am going to see Caroline; and she will not care what sort of a collar I have on, if it is only nice. Olive's words I believe troubled me a

little; for as I laid my clothes in, I did wish my packing had been somewhat more distinguished, however, once I was through, and sat down at my window, my heart gave a great leap up over all disagreeable thoughts. After all, I was going to Philadelphia. The railway train would carry me, if my brown merino *was* insignificant, and it would not trouble itself about my bonnet; neither would Philadelphia, I was persuaded. And another thought came in. Certainly, if it had been best that I should have plenty of money and clothes, like some people, then I should have had them, for "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Therefore, for me, it must be true that those comfortable items would not be "a good thing"—though it is difficult to see why. I must take it on trust; and I *do;* and I do not wish I had anything better than I have got.

Philadelphia, Sep. 6.

A DAY or two after I wrote the above, I left home. Our neighbour Squire Joyce was going to New York and took charge of me so far; from New York to Philadelphia I should have to make the journey alone; but I did not mind that much. I could not mind anything much. I had not been in a rail car since I came from school last; I had never been so far as New York; and now I was going to Philadelphia! The weather was as fine

as possible; and I suppose, if the sunbeams had been fluid gold, and all mine, I could not have felt much richer. Well, they were something better than fluid gold, and they *were* all mine; and I revelled in my possessions, all through the morning light and glory. I kept saying to myself—"My Father"—"my Father"; all this is his, and so it is mine; and I thought of that word of one of the prophets—"I will make the stones of the field to be at peace with thee"; for it seemed to me I had a love to the very stones. And I suppose there is an original harmony between the animate and in animate creation, which will be restored one day and be perfect, as it is not now. And is this feeling of mine the result of a sort of tuning of the strings of my nature in preparation? preparation on my side? to be met by and by and answered by creation on the other side, when stones will have no power to hurt, and wild creatures no more will to do it?

I had the happiest kind of a day; but Mr. Joyce said at the end of it that I had been as quiet as a mouse. He said it when he took leave of me; that was not exactly the end of my day. I had no time to stop in New York, even for rest. We went directly to the Jersey ferry, Mr. Joyce put me in a car of the Philadelphia train, and there he had to leave me.

It was just a little bit strange, being alone in the train and flying along presently through unknown regions; however I got over that feeling,

and then I don't know but the last part of my journey was the pleasantest of all. I was not obliged to talk, that was one thing; and I began to realize better that I was really on the way to Philadelphia, near to seeing Caroline. And besides, I think there is a certain peculiar sweetness about looking straight to God, and having no one between to look to. I do not mean that I do not like to have some human hand near to help, if one should need help; for I do like it, as all women must, I fancy; but nevertheless, if one happens to be quite alone, that sweetness comes in; and I tasted it this evening. I was in that mood when one enjoys everything. I watched with pleasure the forlorn buildings and streets of Jersey City as we steamed along, and then the flat salt meadows over which the September sun was sending the loveliest kind of mellow light. The people in the car amused me too, though there was nothing very striking among them. But I had before me so many human lives, so many human interests; and I am afraid, so much want of all that should make life happy or its interests noble. At least, few faces I saw had an enjoying expression, and very few figures indicated a refined experience; and not to be refined, seems to me not to be happy. There must be a great deal of work to do in the world! What can I do, I wonder? What shall I have to do? Just now, there is nothing but to take care of grandmother; which hardly counts. So I watched and dreamed on; while the train flew along, and the sun set, and

the twilight fell, and the villages hid themselves in darkness, and the fascination of lights came instead of distinct views; lights which only stimulated curiosity without gratifying it. As it grew darker then, I grew sleepy; for I was very tired. So I took no heed of the approaches to the city at last, and was startled by the train stopping.

Before I had much time to debate the question, what was to be done now?—my attention was caught by a gentleman who had entered the car and was evidently seeking for some one. Tall and bright-eyed and well-looking, I guessed and then knew who it was; and as he reached me I stood up. And then my enjoyment began in good earnest. I knew from the first minute, almost from the first look, that he was good and nice and a gentleman. In two minutes we were in a carriage and quit of the train; I was in Philadelphia! and the journey behind me.

Certainly new sensations are delightful. There is nothing desirable about the rattle and the roughness of paved streets; yet I know they were a pleasure to me that night. I got an impression also that Philadelphia must be a large place. Then the carriage stopped, Mr. Birkenstall handed me out, and a door opened into what seemed a very long hall, full of light, with Caroline in the middle of it. I got a very hearty welcome, and was drawn on, with my sister's arm around me, through all the long hall, to a lovely little room at the end of it, where a table was set.

I thought I was in fairyland, it was so pretty. There was bright light from a hanging lamp, reflected from a great mirror over the fireplace which filled the whole space from mantel to ceiling. In the fireplace an enormous jar of flowers; everything light and bright and pretty, look where I would, from the pictures on the walls to the painting on the china cups of the tea service.

"You haven't waited tea for me?" said I.

"Not at all. This is supper. Aren't you starved?"

"I don't feel as if I ever should want to eat again; I am so happy."

"Happiness works the other way," said my brother-in-law. "I never saw anybody yet too happy to eat."

And they tried to make me disprove my words, but perhaps I was too excited. However, I liked a cup of chocolate; and they were both as kind as possible. *That* was better than supper. I thought Caroline looked at me a great deal, which to be sure she could not help; seeing that she was talking to me constantly and asking me questions; yet something in her manner struck me. She looked at me curiously, considerateively; sometimes exchanged a glance with her husband, to which he answered by a smile. Caroline herself was quite in keeping with her house and her room; a great lady, I could see. Mr. Birkenstall must be very well off, which indeed we had always heard.

After I had done all I could with the supper, my sister took me up to my room. A most charming

room; precisely over the one where we had supped, of course having the like size and shape, and as attractive as possible in its furniture and arrangements. Here she kissed me and looked me over again and left me; and I went into the rosiest kind of sleep and dreams.

I awoke to new delight. At the further end of my room was a glass door. My first move was to jump out of bed and open it. There was still a blind door; however I could look through the blinds and see that it opened upon a balcony with an iron railing. Beyond and below the balcony my eye met the glory of flowers; there was a garden behind the house. Truly, beyond the garden rose up again brick walls and stacks of chimneys; I was not in the woody wildness of Chesterfield; nevertheless, this was no little bit of a yard, but a real garden, covering quite a large space with sweetness and colour. I drew a breath of the fresh morning air, and came back to the consideration of my room. The sunlight streaming in shewed me engravings hanging on the walls, window curtains of delicate chintz, a dainty toilet table, every appointment refined and pretty. And I do love pretty things! I could hardly get dressed, for studying the pictures around me. One I could not understand; indeed several of them I could not understand; but this one excited my curiosity particularly. It showed a harvest-field; a young man in queer costume and with a wooden hay fork in his hand, was kneeling on the ground; while a girl

beside him seemed to have been mending his coat or sewing on a button, and was just biting her thread off. Her face had an innocent look, his a devout one. Underneath the picture were some words that I could not read. It was very pretty, I thought; the girl's lap was full of ripe grain just cut, and her figure was graceful; the face demurely pretty. The young man was a little womanish; I liked him less. Another picture represented three old women, one of them holding a distaff and drawing out a thread, which another is just about to cut. I could not make out who they were or what they were doing, but the faces fascinated me; one was so placidly benevolent, the one spinning the yarn, and the one with the shears so keen and hard. The third face, more in shadow, showed great distress.

Looking and speculating, I finally got dressed, and pushed open my blind door. Sweet warm air came in, and the flowers in the garden below blazed up at me, and a glory of sunlight was on all the brick walls I could see. I was beyond measure delighted to have such a doorway to myself. Drawing up a low chair close to the threshold, I sat down with my Bible, wondering if I should have much time before breakfast; and just then I heard a church clock somewhere, a good way off but distinct, strike the hour of seven. We were not to breakfast till eight. I should have a good hour to myself.

By seeming chance I opened at the second chap-

ter of Proverbs. It is strange how things strike one in reading the Bible, as if they were new; when one has seen them a thousand times before. So here to-day. I was never struck by the words until now; and now they took hold of me. I mean specially the third and fourth and fifth verses. "If thou criest after knowledge"—did I ever? I think I have; yet not as it follows—"If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; *then* shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." People search for hid treasure with the utmost diligence and eagerness of search. And what is the "hid treasure" here? Have not I found Christ? do I not know and love him already? It must be that there is a great deal more that I do not know, and this is to be searched for. I suppose, one reason why these words struck me was, that I felt myself in a kind of fairyland; and had a certain inner consciousness that I was likely to be drawn into an enjoyment of pretty things in general, which might have an engrossing effect and indispose me for *this* search. Maybe there is no danger, but also maybe there *is;* and it is well to be forewarned. So I must take care that I seek for God most and first; and as a means, I will take care to have this hour to myself every morning before breakfast. And then, see,—

"He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints."

I rested myself on that promise; and before the

hour was over I had found in my chapter what was already better than all the flowers and all the sunlight and all my sister's pretty things. Then I went down to breakfast.

I immediately felt they were looking at me again. Well, why not? I was looking at them; yet I think not just in the same way.

"Is Olive as handsome as ever?" Caroline asked presently.

"I think so. I see no change in her."

"Imagine an unchanging existence, Sandie!" said my sister.

"Seems to agree with some people," my brother-in-law answered. "Desire does not look as if she moped."

"I never mope!"

"So I should suppose."

"But a life without change!" resumed my sister. "For it comes to that. Life in a New England village is the everlasting turning of a wheel."

"What sort of a wheel?" I asked; and they both laughed, without answering.

"You have come just in time for Mrs. Marshall's garden party," my sister went on. "The last of the season. Just in time."

"What sort of a party is a garden party?"

"You will see. Of course, it is a party in a garden, or rather in the pleasure grounds about the house."

"It is to be hoped the warm weather will last," remarked my brother-in-law.

I thought to myself, it was very doubtful if I should get to the party; however, I kept silence about that, and merely asked if garden parties were pleasant?

"Like all others," my sister replied with a shrug. "Depends. If the weather is good, and the right people are invited, and if you happen to fall in with those you want to see, and if the givers of the party understand their business."

"Then it must be a very doubtful question," said I, laughing in my turn. "Very doubtful indeed."

"The most important thing, Desire," said my brother-in-law, "is after all, whether your dress is right. I observe, that is the test by which ladies measure their enjoyment of festive occasions."

"And what is the reason?" said Caroline. "Do not you men do your best to make us feel that the one thing depends very much upon the other?"

"How do you dress for a garden party?" I next asked.

"In anything, for a girl like you; anything that is light and pretty."

"Black silk wouldn't do, then?"

"Certainly not! Black silk would do for an old woman."

"It is my belief Desire would look well in black silk," said my brother-in-law.

"Don't you go to putting notions in her head, Sandie. Desire may meet her fate at this garden party, who knows? I shall not have her going in black silk!"

"Meet my fate!" said I. But they both laughed merrily, at my look, I suppose.

"Young ladies always want to know their fate," my brother-in-law resumed when he had recovered his gravity, and addressing himself seriously to me.

"But I know mine."

"You do! Pray explain."

"Why, you know I belong in a New England village, where Caroline says life is just a turning of a wheel. She did not say 'spinning-wheel,' but I suppose she meant it."

"Ah, but there are tangents—there are tangents," Mr. Birkenstall went on. "I infer that you do not have garden parties in Chesterfield?"

"No."

"What sort of parties *do* you have?"

"None. That is, almost never. Some of us come together once a fortnight to sew for a missionary box; but that is hardly what you would call a party."

"Hardly."

"Might as well call a prayermeeting a party," said Caroline.

"The prayermeeting is the pleasantest party of the two."

"Why?" asked my brother-in-law.

"I think the work done is pleasanter."

"She wants a course of garden parties," said my brother-in-law turning to his wife. "Badly. May I ask," (to me) "what occasioned you to suggest black silk as a possible costume?"

"Because it is the best I have," I said smiling. "Unless a muslin will do."

"A muslin will do, of course," said my sister, "if it is fresh and well made; but we will see."

And after breakfast we went up to my room, and my sister sat down with a judicial air and desired to be shewn all I had in the way of dresses; the whole contents of my trunk, in short. Before I had gone far in my unpacking, she rose up and turned the key in the door. Then she gave herself to the business. I took out my black silk, my buff muslin and my blue muslin. Caroline examined them silently; surveyed my stock of gloves, which was extremely small, my collars and laces, which were on the same modest establishment, my ribbands, which conformed to all the rest.

"What has Olive been thinking about?" was her final comment, made without any preliminary.

"Olive? She thought I was not fit to come Do you think so too?" I said, with a momentary check.

"Yes. No, not as you mean, child. Olive might have indulged you with a little more outfit, I should think."

"You know we have not the money."

"I know all about it," said Caroline a little impatiently. "You have not money for everything that might be desirable; but a few of these little necessary trifles cost next to nothing. Never mind; Sandie is as kind as he can be, and he likes you,

and he has money enough for all we want. We will make it all right, Desire."

"But won't my blue muslin be good enough?"

"For the party, to-morrow? No, it will not. Trust me. There is not time to get a dress made; but I can manage with one of mine. The other things we will go out and get now."

"I am not so tall as you."

"That is nothing. We can take the skirt up. The rest will do."

"But, Carrie, I am content with what I have got."

"Don't be a goose. You have no business to be content with it, for it is not sufficient; and if you are content, I am not. When one has a little sister like you, one likes to dress her up, I can tell you. So come."

"I am very glad you like me," I said, putting my things away as fast as I could. "But, Caroline, before we go out, do tell me what these pictures are about?"

"Pictures?" said my sister. "Oh, that old thing? That is the three Fates."

"I don't understand."

"You must get Sandie to tell you. The ancients believed in three old women who had human destinies in their hands. One holds a distaff, one spins the thread, and the third cuts it off; that is birth and life and death, you see."

"Birth, and life, and death?" I repeated, coming before the picture. "And that is the reason why

the one who spins looks so wistfully at the one who is going to cut? The thread is the thread of a human life? O that is very beautiful! And the one with the shears, Caroline, what a strange expression her face has. It is not cruel, but it is hard,—hard. You see she will cut, when she has a mind, and prayers won't stop her. I like that *very* much."

"Do you?" Caroline said carelessly.

"How dreadful it must have been, though, in those days, to believe one's life in the hands of a Fate! how dreadful!"

"Well—" said Caroline slowly, "how much is that different from what we believe now? It comes to pretty much the same thing."

"Oh no!" I returned. "How can you say so? We do not believe anything of the sort."

"I do. Yes, and you do."

"Believe that our lives are in the hands of a Fate!"

"It comes to the same thing," said Caroline coolly. "You believe that everything is fixed and determined beforehand, don't you? and unchangeable."

"Why no," said I laughing. "Not by any Fate. Nor by any power, in the way you mean. I don't think it is fixed, for instance, whether I shall go to Mrs. Marshall's garden party. It depends on my own will, or on your's, or on both of them."

"Well, let metaphysics alone. I abhor them. If it depends on my will, you are going. Put on

your bonnet and let us lose no time in getting what is necessary."

But when I was ready, my sister surveyed me critically. I had put on my travelling dress again.

"Is that all you have to go out in?"

"Won't it do?" said I, somewhat abashed, and with a growing appreciation of the new standard for things prevalent in Philadelphia.

"What is Olive thinking of?"

"Why, this is very well for Chesterfield; and Olive was not thinking of my coming here, any more than I was."

"After she knew you were coming?"

"You know, Caroline," I repeated, "we have not much money to do anything with."

Caroline looked at me and looked at me, from head to foot and back again.

"What else could you wear? Put on that black silk and let me see you in it."

I obeyed; and she said that might do. She brought a shawl of her own to wrap round my shoulders, and we set forth.

I had felt a little doubtful about wearing the best I had to walk in the streets; but doubts and scruples and everything but delight vanished from me. The lovely weather had continued; streets and houses were rich and gay in the glow and shine of it. Such long streets; such immense houses; such gay stores! And besides, we were going on my business, even mine; and it fascinated me, even while it half frightened me, to see

Caroline buy things for nobody's behoof but my own. I remonstrated, but she told me she was spending nothing. Gloves, beautiful gloves, several pairs, of different tints and colours; handkerchiefs; cravats and neck ribbands; collars and laces; boots and shoes. Then she went into a milliner's and bought me a new bonnet. We were all the morning about it, in the course of which I saw a good deal of Philadelphia. Then, as soon as lunch was over, we set about trying on dresses, and doing the little that was needful to make one of them fit me. At dinner Mr. Birkenstall asked me how I felt?

"I feel guilty," I said. "Caroline has spent the whole day upon me and my dress."

"I presume *she* would have felt guilty if she had not done it," he returned. "Don't you know, Desire, that the principal business of a woman is to dress herself?"

"No," said I, bluntly.

"Your education is not finished."

"What is the purpose of her dressing herself, then?"

"Ah," said Mr. Birkenstall smiling, "do you ask me that? I am curious to see how things will approve themselves to your judgment. Wait till after Mrs. Marshall's party; and then you shall tell me what you think is the answer to your own question."

So to-morrow comes the party; and I suppose I shall learn several things, besides that.

Sep. 8.

IT is over, and I will tell about it.

Caroline dressed me in a white muslin, prettier than anything I ever had on in my life; it was ruffly and fleecy, and looped with blue knots here and there, and she said I looked very nice. For me, I did not know myself; and when we joined Mr. Birkenstall down stairs, I certainly felt like Cinderella in the fairy tale after the wand of her fairy godmother had been waved over her. Sandie looked at me approvingly.

"Will she do?" said Caroline. "The hat fits her, don't you think?"

It was a Leghorn flat, with a blue ribband. I would have liked a black ribband better, but my sister said for this afternoon it must be blue.

"She will do," said Sandie. "I am going to be very curious to know all the new impressions Desire will have received before the evening is over."

Caroline laughed, and we went at once to Mrs. Marshall's.

There is no doubt but the new impressions of that day were various. First came delight and wonder. The favourable weather continuing, warm, spicy, and dry, all the world was in summer attire; and it gave the scene an inexpressibly pretty character. Mrs. Marshall's grounds are ample, nicely laid out, perfectly well kept; there was an abundance of pleasant shade, groves of ornamental trees,

copses, clumps of shrubbery, beds of gay flowers and stretches of well shaven green turf. Everywhere seats were placed; in every shady spot, in every nice point for seeing anything pretty; and as we entered the grounds the picture they presented was an exceedingly gay and lively one. It looked at first sight as if the flowers had forsaken their sphere and taken to walking and promenading. What I would have liked now would have been an invisible cap, and liberty to wander about and look at everybody and everything; but of course nothing of the kind was to be thought of. I could as little be free as invisible.

My next experience was a gentleman whom Mrs. Marshall charged with the care of me. She told him I was a stranger, and confided it to him to shew me the grounds. So we set out. But I could see nothing half so well with him as without him. He was a middle-aged man, a little bald, with rather prominent light blue eyes; and I thought he did not exactly know what to do with me. At least he did not know what to say to me; and I did not know what to say to him. The sense of this became so painful to me that I could neither see or enjoy in any direction, for thinking that I ought to talk; when I could not talk. Mr. Stone, that was his name, remarked indeed once that it was very warm; to which of course I assented, as it was impossible to dispute it; and then he said that it was a pretty scene, which was likewise undeniable; I could only endorse his opinion. Then

he asked me if I would like to look at the croquet players; and I said yes; but when we came to the croquet ground nobody was playing. A game had been played and finished; the balls and cues were lying idly about. Mr. Stone and I walked on. I was so sorry for him that I forgot to be sorry for myself. At last I sat down to rest on a sofa giving a pretty view of the lawn and the house; and Mr. Stone took post beside me like a sentinel. Then a loophole of escape for himself and for me (I suppose) suggested itself; he asked me suddenly if I would not like some refreshment? I hesitated, and he went on to say eagerly, there was a refreshment tent on the lawn at the other side of the house. I was as glad as he was to know it; and we went there.

We found a very large, long tent, in which a long table stood full of everything tempting. I took what my companion offered me, just to give him and myself some change and the fiction of being occupied with something. Must I be a burden on him the whole afternoon, I wondered? But no; that was not to be. Our hostess came up, and gave Mr. Stone another commission; introduced to me a Mr. Francis, and then flitted away again. Seeing that I was taking an ice, Mr. Francis also took one, and we stood beside one another, plying our spoons.

My new friend was a new variety; I saw that immediately. He was a younger man, very tall and slender, but not at a loss what to do with his

length of limb; not in the least awkward; very well dressed; with an air of general acquaintance with everything in the world which it is very difficult to describe and impossible to explain. I do not mean that he was conceited; the knowledge was genuine; how I came to see that he had it, I cannot tell, but I got the impression almost imme diately. I think he was what the books call "a fine gentleman." I got the impression too that he was surveying me, and I have a small guess at the result of his survey.

His first remark was that the afternoon was very warm.

"Luckily for Mrs. Marshall," I said.

"Why, if you please?"

"I fancy the scene would not be so pretty if people could not come out in their summer dresses."

"You find it pretty, then?"

"Very pretty."

"You think ladies look better in summer than in winter?"

"More like flowers," I answered, glancing at him; for I wondered if he thought me a ninny

"More like flowers," he repeated. "I do not see any difference. I am always in a garden of roses when I see a collection of ladies."

"Philadelphia must be a wonderful place then for beauty," I answered, not knowing how to interpret the glance with which he said this.

"Don't you know it is?"

"I am a stranger here, and cannot tell."

"Have you been to the river side?"

"No."

"Let us go."

He gave me his arm and we strolled away, taking a direction that I had not followed before. The scene was indeed very pretty. As the sun got lower the lights were more picturesque; and gay flitting figures in all the colours of the rainbow made a sort of kaleidoscope variety.

"What do you think of garden parties?" my companion began again. Now Caroline had told me not to say that I had never been to one before; so I hesitated. He went on.

"I hope Mrs. Marshall will give us a dance by and by. Do you like dancing?"

"I have never tried it."

"Never tried! But you are going to try?"

"I think not."—O dear, this was worse than Mr. Stone. I thought of Æsop's fable, and wished for my King Log again.

"What can have deprived so pleasant an amusement of the favour of one so fitted to enjoy it and make others enjoy?"

"I suppose, Mr. Francis, it would not have your favour, if you could not acquit yourself in it to your satisfaction."

"Is *that* the reason?" he asked laughing.

"No, it is not the reason. I never go to balls."

"Have you heard Tricarelli?"

"No. I do not know who he is."

"Not know Tricarelli? What a pleasure before

you! She is the famous new prima donna. Are you fond of music?"

"Some sorts," I said; feeling vaguely that my sorts would not be his.

"Well, you go to the opera?"

"No."

"You will go?"

"I think not. I go to nothing of the kind."

"Why not?" he inquired, looking down at me. "May my curiosity ask?"

"I am a country girl, Mr. Francis, and understand none of your city ways."

"I am sure you understand everything that is good," he said carelessly. And—I am sure *you* don't,—went through my head.

We were passing through an open grove of locust trees, where the ground was nicely kept, and winding paths invited one in every direction. The lights and shades under the trees were beautiful. By and by I saw water appearing between the branches and leaves, and then in a minute we came out upon the bank of the river. Seats were placed here too, as everywhere, but we were almost alone; the croquet ground and the refreshment pavilion had attracted all the world another way. Mr. Francis asked me if I would rest, and I sat down on one of the settees fronting the river. The lights from the clouds were reflected in the water· the trees and banks shewed doub'e; the soft rich colours, the fair sky, made a sweet picture. If I had but been alone!

"This is a painter's colouring," said Mr. Francis. "Do you paint?"

"No."—I was beginning to feel most miserably my ignorance of everything my companion knew, my ignorance of everything in the world; the intense contraction of my range of thought as compared with his. And yet, I had a world too, equally unknown to him; but neither of us could talk to the other of what each knew. We had nothing in common.

"This is also an evening to tempt a poet. Who is your favourite?"

"My favourite poet?"

"I was so bold as to ask that?"

"I have not read much. I believe Milton is my favourite."

"Milton! 'Paradise Lost'?"

"Yes, that especially."

"Do you mean," said he, sitting down now beside me,—"that you believe in all that paraphernalia of devils and angels? You, with so gentle a mouth, and such wise eyes?"

I thought my gentleman had no business to tell me about my mouth and eyes, and that he deserved a setting down; but I could not give it him. I did not know how. I defended myself with silence, but everybody knows that is a very insufficient defence.

"You don't believe in a personal devil, for instance?" Mr. Francis went on. I knew he was laughing at me in a polite way. I answered however,—

"Why not?"

"Why not? Why because one should always believe the best. Don't you think so? Who ever saw a devil? And *you*—you have certainly had nothing to do but with the angels, ever since you drew the breath of this world."

"Who ever saw an angel?" I returned coolly.

At this moment a party came by, whom my companion started up to greet. These were people of his own sort. They understood one another; the encounter was very lively, and the badinage on both sides very spirited; the ladies rallied him for not having sought them out, and he declared himself bound in flowery chains and a captive. I think he thought the little country girl would not follow his meaning. They parted with an agreement to meet presently in another quarter of the grounds. Mr. Francis sat down again. I felt very uncomfortable; sorry for him, and sorry for myself. I was a terribly stupid companion for him; and he could not get rid of me! I meditated, how I could set him free.

After a minute he asked me if I was rested? if I would like to walk?

"I would rather be quiet here a little longer," I said. "But if you will go and join your friends, Mr. Francis, I can find my way quite well alone."

"You are not dismissing me?" he said.

"Not at all; only unbinding your chains."

"Don't you know, that is sometimes the cruellest unkindness you can do to a man?"

"Unbinding his chains?"

"Yes,—when the chains are regarded as a distinction."

"This is not one of those cases," said I, with laughter which I could not help. "I know the care of me is keeping you from your friends. Please do not let me keep you."

"You do me the honour to speak of my friends. I will confess. I do not believe in friends, any more than I do in devils."

"I am sorry for you."

"It would be delightful to have you sorry for me."

"I am quite serious, Mr Francis. I am not at all afraid to be left alone. Consider me a country girl, used to take care of herself; and go and rejoin your companions."

"Leave you here alone!" said he. "Heavens and earth! what should I deserve. If you heard me mention chains a while ago, you heard me mention that they were chains of flowers; not only distinction, but pleasure. I shall wear no others so willingly this evening."

The light, careless, superior way in which this was said,—and looked,—was very unendurable to me. Not that the man was rude; he was not rude; but I could read him better than he knew. He thought I was a little country girl and could not read him; but I saw he was partly amused and wholly bored. I did not like precisely to furnish him stuff for either experience.

"I beg you will leave me!" I repeated.

"That is impossible; but—Ah, here comes somebody. Good evening!—Miss Burgoyne, since you dismiss me, may I give you into the charge of this gentleman, a friend of mine? Mr. Iredell, let me present you to Miss Burgoyne. She expresses a wish to rest, and I am under the necessity of putting in an appearance elsewhere. I will trust you to see that she gets safe back to the house."

He handed me over as easily as if I had been a parcel; I do not know whether he would have been as careless about a parcel. He raised his hat and was gone; and I looked anxiously at the stranger to see what sort of new protection I was to expect. However, the very first words reassured me, and I breathed freer.

What a subtle difference there is in manner. In some things these two men were not unlike. They were both, I judge, about of an age; they were both gentlemen, in one way; they both knew the world; they had both travelled; neither of them, I should think, was a bad man; both had great ease of manner. And yet, the ease of Mr. Francis set me on thorns; while the ease of Mr. Iredell seemed to put every annoying thing at an infinite distance from me. I had been like a bird with feathers all ruffled by fright or anger; and suddenly the ruffled plumage was smooth, and I was as calm as if I had been in my own nest, instead of Mrs. Marshall's garden party.

Mr. Iredell had understood that I wished to be quiet; so he made no move to go from the spot. He sat down and began to talk. Well, Mr. Francis had begun to talk, too, but we could not get on; now it went as easily as oiled machinery. Of what did we not talk! Mr. Iredell told me about the Bavarian Alps, among which he had rambled; he described the scenery; he detailed the manners and habits of the people. From them we got naturally to the Dolomite mountains of the Rienz valley, (I don't in the least know where the Rienz valley is.) And I listened as if I were listening to a fairy tale, so wild and strange and unearthly the story sounded. Of the barren wilderness, the utterly dead world, the rocks cleft and riven into shafts and battlements and towers, only towers with no light to them; and of the stone pines which once green and glorious now stand upon the stone heaps and stretch their skeleton arms over the waste, bearing testimony of the life that once was and the death that reigns now in those solitudes. Mr. Iredell had seen them himself and could describe them well; and he told me about the daring climbers that get to the top of those sheer dolomite pinnacles, and how they do it. I suppose he saw that I was interested, for he went on, from one thing to another. He had travelled much in Switzerland. I had read about Switzerland; but it is quite another thing to look in the face of somebody who has been there and tells you with his own mouth what his own eyes have seen. He told me, moreover, things I

had never heard or read before; not only details of the scenery, but details of the people's life, and their character and manners and superstitions; especially in the German Alps. One story I recall particularly. It seems it is an article of their faith, that the great glaciers are a place of purgatory for the departed, where they are gradually purified not by fire but by frost. So many times they must be all frozen up, before the work is done and they can be released.

"And they *believe* this?" I asked.

"Not only believe it, but they think they can hear sometimes the sounds that come either from these weary souls or from the clinking of their ice-fringed garments. Don't you know what peculiar sounds are given out from large masses of ice in winter, even in our latitudes?"

"No. I do not think I do."

"You have not been where you could hear them. But in the neighbourhood of one of those great glaciers the noises are exceedingly weird and startling, arising from the combined effects of frost and of the glacier's motion."

"Then they move? How can they?"

"They *must*. They are forced onward and downward by the pressure of the upper portions, constantly reinforced by new masses forming from the reservoirs of snow. They are just rivers of ice, making their way slowly down through the bed they have found for themselves, till they reach lower ground at a point where the melting just

keeps pace with the amount of ice supplied by the daily motion or flow. Are you tired? Shall I tell you one of the people's purgatory legends?"

"Pray do! I should like to hear it very much."

"It takes me back there again. Well—there was a young Swiss fellow once upon a time who was a devotee of the dance. Nothing in all the world he liked so well. Do you dance?"

"Mr. Francis was very much astonished at me, that I declared I did not."

"Mr. Francis is a good dancer himself. However, he is not near loving it as my Swiss boy did. He danced whenever he could dance. He would give up anything else for an opportunity of dancing. Of course he was well known and much sought after to be a member of the company at all merry-makings. At some of these he became acquainted with a girl of like mind with himself; *she* liked nothing so well as the dance; and they danced together, till they danced into an affection and a betrothal. What do you think of such matches?"

"Do people,—other people,—make such matches?"

"Excuse me, I am very impertinently wondering in what part of the world you have lived?" Mr. Iredell said with humourous gravity.

"In no part," I said. "I have not lived in the world at all."

"So I should suppose. Take it from your independent standpoint then. What should you think of such matches?"

"Very good," said I gravely,—"if people had nothing to do but dance."

"I am tempted to ask you, what beside have people to do?"

"I don't know what *you* have to do," I said, smiling at the oddity of the question. "For me, I have to help my sister take care of our old grandmother."

"And your heart has no sympathy with my Swiss boy's and Swiss girl's longing for the waltz?"

"I might say 'no' and 'yes.' I love pleasure, as well as other people, Swiss or American. Dancing does not seem to me the highest pleasure in the world. But besides that—Mr. Iredell, I am a Christian."

"What then?" said he with a pleasant look. "You surely know that the amusement you decline is practised by nearly all that call themselves Christians?"

"Not in our village. And, of course I am no rule for others, but since you ask me,—I always remember those words, 'Whatsoever ye do, . . . do all in the name of the Lord Jesus'; and when I have been invited to dancing parties, a few times, and wanted to go, I never could see how I could go 'in his name.' So I staid at home."

I looked at Mr. Iredell as I said this, to see how he would take it; and I did not quite know. He was silent and his eyes cast down, and the look was steadfast, but at the same time had a kind of peculiar light in it. Then he asked if I would like

to hear the rest of his story? I said, "O yes, if he pleased!"

"My two young Swiss were alike in their supreme devotion to the dance. So they danced wherever they could, whenever they met. Their courtship was dancing, whatever their life might turn out to be. But the life never came to them together. The girl caught cold at a merry-making, and died.

"Then her lover was desolate. Dancing was ended, and everything else, for him; he avoided society and lived alone as much as he could. Neither did his sorrow give way with time, or anything induce him to change his solitary manner of life. His love was true love, you see. A long time passed. One summer he was employed in cutting wood high up on the mountain; and while so employed had his home in a retired little hamlet, likewise high up on the mountain, near the regions of perpetual snow and ice. This little hamlet was deserted as well as retired; forsaken perhaps because of its exposed situation and great severity of climate; at any rate it had long had no inhabitants. He lived in it alone. Therefore he was greatly surprised one evening on returning late from work, to see that the window-shutters of a ruined old house opposite his hut were open, light was pouring out from them, and the gay notes of a violin floated merrily out on the air. Moreover, the music was dance music, festive and merry. Many a day was it since the fellow had heard a violin; and

now he listened, and his foot beat time involuntarily; and at last he could not stand it any longer; he must see what was going on, even if he took no part. Of course he would take no part. He tipped over the road on the ends of his toes, saw that the house door was not quite shut, pushed it open, found the inner door also manageable, and peeped in. The room was fully lighted, though he could see neither fire nor candles; the illumination seemed to come from the dancers, who were whirling round the room in a wild, furious waltz. Yet every face was pale and grave and earnest, as if it had been a sad rather than a merry occasion that they were celebrating. They were dressed in old-fashioned costumes; but the looker-on could hear now and then between the notes of the violin, a singular clicking and clashing, as of bits of ice together; and then, looking more narrowly, he observed that the dresses and even the hair of the company were hung full of little icicles, and their very fingers had the appearance of having been turned to water crystals. There was no noise but that of the music and the ice clinking; no voices made themselves heard; the revelry was as still as it was wild."

"Where did the music come from?"

"O yes, the music! Two musicians sat upon the stove, in which there was no fire, and played; one an odd little humpbacked figure, with a violin, the other handling a bass viol. Among all the dancers the young man noticed one in particular; a tall fig-

ure of a girl, whose face he could not see; she wore a long white robe and in her hair was a glittering chaplet. He could not see her face, yet something about the figure seemed strangely familiar; he could not turn his eyes away from her. Suddenly she faced him, and the young man shrank back with a cry of horror; it was the face of his bride whom he had lost."

"Were they married?"

"No, but the Germans call a lady a bride *before* her wedding, instead of after; from the time of her betrothal. The poor young man gave way and fled; ran over the road, shut himself up in his hut, and covered himself up in his bed; but as you may suppose, he was unable to sleep. His limbs shook, his horror was like a cold bath; he could not get out of his ears the sound of the music and of the clinking flakes of ice. Hours may have gone by; and then he was conscious of a bright light that was filling his own little room. He took his head from under the bedclothes and watched, full of fear, as he saw the light in a sort gather itself into form and substance and assume the outlines of a human shape. He guessed who it must be, and shuddering closed his eyes. But now he heard the clink of the ice flakes again, close to his bed; his coverlet was gently drawn back and an icy hand passed over his face. This was too much to bear; he started up and called out, 'In Heaven's name, who are you?' Then he felt an icy kiss upon his lips.

"According to the popular belief, spirits of the departed cannot begin a conversation with the living. But if they are spoken to, then they are permitted to breathe human breath and to carry on a discourse with a living person, which may last from midnight to cockcrow. Also, the kiss of their lips takes away the fear naturally felt before then. So the way was smooth now for an interview. The apparition answered that she was his lost love; that she had come from the glacier; and that at this season she was obliged to come up here with the rest of her companions and dance. She informed the young man that the sin of their life time formed their punishment in purgatory. 'How long I should have had to do penance,' she went on, 'if you had not spoken to me! Now the salvation of us all depends upon you. Will you help us?'

"He answered with a solemn promise; and they talked together during the rest of the night.

"Next day the young man went to see his priest. They had a long conference. When midnight came again, the two met at the church, went in, the priest fastened the doors on the inside; and what passed nobody knew, but when after a time they came out again, the young man's face was pale, but resolute and glad. From that day he had nothing more to do with merry-makings. He was a changed man. He spoke little, prayed much for the poor souls in the glacier, and did a great deal of good in the world. He remained unmarried

till his death. After his death, the priest revealed what until then he had been obliged to keep secret. He told how that night in the church, after receiving the young man's confession, he had solemnly married him to the lady of his love. The bride had been invisible to the priest, but not so to the bridegroom, who had given his life to her to save her and her companions of dancing tendencies from the purgatory of the freezing glacier.—What do you think of that for a story, Miss Burgoyne?"

I looked away, for I had been eagerly listening, and could not at first find an answer.

"What do you say to such constancy?"

"I do not think much of it. Any good and true man would do as much."

"You think so?"

"Do not you, Mr. Iredell?"

"I am afraid it is rare. Men are selfish."

"But *true* love 'seeks not her own.' I am sure there are women, and men, who would give their lives,—or the comfort and happiness of their lives, which is more,—to secure those they love from great evil."

"And ask no return?"

"No return but that fact. Why, you believe that, don't you?"

"If the poor mountaineers of the German Alps believe it, why should not I?"

"Are you thinking that there is more truth among mountaineers than among people that live in low lands?"

"I was not thinking that. But perhaps it is true."

"Why should it be true?"

"I do not know; but there may be several reasons. The influence of grand nature scenes cannot be without effect. And then life that is led in a mountainous country cannot be one of ease and dalliance."

"But there are grand nature scenes everywhere, Mr. Iredell."

"Quite true," said he with a quick light in his face. "That is quite true. But you have never seen the Alps?"

"No, I have never seen anything, except Long Island Sound. But then, why should ease of living extinguish truth and nobleness?"

"Miss Burgoyne, experience has shewn that it is not good for people, taken in the mass and taken individually, to be exempt from the necessity of work, and even hard work. The command, or sentence, given in the garden of Eden, condemning man to hard labour, was most beneficent and kind."

"Thorns and thistles too!" said I.

"Thorns and thistles too; as things are."

"As things are?"—

"Yes. I mean, with sin in the world."

"Mr. Iredell, have you travelled also in warm countries? in the East?"

"Yes,—much."

"And found the people not so good?"

"We must beware of hasty judgments. Before

one race can be compared fairly with another, very many things must be taken account of. Not only mountains and glaciers, or the absence of them; but religion, government, and education. In any case however, climate has a great deal to do. An Oriental bazar would be simply impossible in a cold country. So would an Oriental coffee house. And customs and manners act and reäct upon one an other."

And then he went on to tell me of the first; a ba zar in an Eastern city. I shall never forget that talk. It was as good as the Arabian Nights. I seemed to myself to be there, going through the streets of some Oriental wonderplace; with the warm colouring, the soft twilight, the hush of the great mart, in the midst of all its business. I saw the large courtyards, passed from time to time, where the camels were getting unloaded in the shade of the plane trees, and the idling Turks were sitting looking on. Then the little shops, all along the Bazar ways; the Asiatic variety and oddity and beauty of the wares, which Mr. Iredell was so good as to describe to me; having, I suppose, a kindly sympathy for my womanish eagerness of curiosity. He told me of embroidered cloths, marvellous in pattern and execution; silk gauzes of rarest manufacture; inlaid weapons, and old china. I followed him in fancy, going on through one after another street or alley of the bazar; I drank almond milk with him at a sort of little restaurant, and looked about me at the cook shops, the confec-

tioner's; saw the skewers full of bits of broiled mutton, the honey cakes and the unleavened bread. After that, we went in imagination to a seller of carpets, in the purely Turkish portion of the bazar; where in a large, cool room the merchant's clerk gives us chairs, and delicate cups of coffee and cigarettes are brought, before we enter upon the heavy business that has brought us there. And then the carpets! Turkey carpets, thick and soft and rich, of all sorts of colours, yet so mixed that the general tone is almost grave. Persian carpets, more brilliant and vivid. And after buying our carpets, on and on we went, through whole streets filled not only with one kind of shops, but the shops filled with only one or two kinds of ware. Think of a whole street of shops in which nothing is offered for sale but different kinds of fez; and another with nothing to be seen but shoes; and another with silk scarfs and velvet jackets.

"What a distance," said I at last, "between such a bazar, and one of our country stores; where everything is sold at once, from pork and candles to muslin and books!"

"And where there is no one thing pleasant to look upon, or arranged with the smallest degree of the sense of beauty. While in an Oriental bazar almost every article is beautiful; artistic in design, just and frequently exquisite in execution, and oftentimes absolutely wonderful in colour. Europeans cannot equal them; western imitations are unbearable. To go no further, the

carpets and stuffs and embroideries and pottery forms, are studies of harmony and grace and subdued splendour."

"Is it just the difference between an old country and a new?" said I, ruminating.

"No, that will not do. European countries are not new. No, and it is not civilization. The fact is, that the children of Shem and the children of Ham are gifted with a luxurious sense of beauty in some things, such as the children of Japhet never had."

"Are we the children of Japhet?"

"Yes."

"And Europeans?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Iredell smiling.

"I have never studied these things," said I. "But I thought Greek art—and European art—"

"Right enough. The old Greeks had an high sense of beauty, both in nature and art. Yet it was rather intellectual and poetical than luxurious; it had little to do with colour. The art of the rest of Europe has been largely the outgrowth of religious feeling. Among all its painters there has been but one Titian. The children of Japhet are thinkers, inventers, originaters of progress, travellers; the children of Shem and Ham do not invent and do not make progress; they like to be still and enjoy. In the levees of Indian princes to-day there is a daring and delicious use of colour, which not the most splendid of European courts can even rival."

"I have never seen beautiful things," said I,

coming back,—"except the beautiful things of nature."

"The models and patterns for all the rest," said Mr. Iredell. "If you have seen those your eye has been filled. And yet, between the country store you speak of, or a village fair, and the shows of an Eastern bazar, there is a wide, wide distance. *That* is like a small city; with its fountains, and even its mosques, and its public baths; its most varied and most picturesque costumes, and its endless diverse kinds of merchandise; and beauty everywhere."

"You have made me see it," I said. "I shall never forget it."

"I have tired you, I fear? Never get an old traveller upon his rambles, if you do not want him to keep going. You see, I have forgotten myself."

"I was going to say, I was afraid I had tired you," said I rising; "for you must have seen how I liked to listen."

"Are you going?"

"Isn't it time?"

"Upon my word, I believe it must be," said he looking at the sky and then around him at the coloured lanterns, to which neither of us till now had paid much attention. In fact, we had been sitting with our backs to them, as I said, on a seat fronting the water; from which the reflection of the sunset glow had long unheeded faded away. Now stars were out; and when we rose up and turned about, we saw the grounds transformed into a

gay, bright, witchingly pretty wilderness of coloured lights and reflections. It was lovely; but I was sorry to turn from the quiet starlight in which we had been talking. I was sorry to go. It was time to go indeed. I was presently received and taken possession of by our hostess who informed me my sister was looking for me; and we came home.

Sep. 9.

I WAS up as early as usual the next morning, even earlier, eager to get dressed and sit down at my balcony door. I set the glass and the blind wide open and let the gentle morning air and sunlight stream in. How glad I am of this glass door and balcony! It is true, I see from it nothing so pretty as the heads of the old chestnut trees at home and the soft hilly outlines; but then I have no wish to see those just now; I get instead a gay flash of all the colours in the rainbow from the artemisias down in the garden. Pale yellow and orange, lavender and rose and purple, copper brown and crimson and white. They are just a joy to me. And then the view of the houses and chimneys has an odd kind of charm, ugly as they are; they are the signs of such a new world and give so much food for speculation. And the morning sky above them is like a friend that I know, with its clear, grave brightness, high and pure; and the early

sunbeams bring the same message that they do where they shine upon better things than a forest of chimney stacks.

I sat down with my Bible as usual, but my thoughts were very scattering. I could not fix them. It seemed as if since yesterday morning I had entered a new sphere of existence. Things seemed different around me, and I seemed different to myself. I do not know why the houses and chimney stacks to-day suggested to me thoughts of the wideness of Mr. Iredell's world as compared with the narrowness of mine. I could not help it. As I looked, that was what came to me. Europe, Switzerland, Bavaria, Alps and Alpine dwellers, the East and its turban-headed and fez-covered Moslems, Egypt, Jerusalem, Smyrna; old and later civilizations; national characteristics; popular legends; history's chequered chronicle; all this and a great deal more came crowding before my mind's eye, like the coloured stones in a kaleidoscope; only *not* like those reduced to orderly, regular, harmonious combinations, but in a jumble of vague ideas and images. And there was the difference between Mr. Iredell's mind and mine. In his mind, all the objects found their place and their proper relation to other objects; and the result was an incalculable richness of treasure, a fulness of usable material, all well used. While in *my* thoughts—but how little I knew, to have even thoughts about. I seemed to know nothing. Certainly I have *seen* nothing, and that I cannot help; it is not likely

that I ever shall see much, beyond my chestnut trees; even the house roofs of Philadelphia are an extraordinary enlargement of my range of vision; but how little I know! What was that Mr. Iredell said about the painters of Europe, and the architecture of the Middle Ages? Then, even in history, which certainly I ought to know, how few fields I have explored. And of other reading, our talk last night had opened to me wide glimpses and stirred wild desires. All this went now in a confusion of combinations through my brain; till at last I remembered my time was going, pulled myself up, and tried to bring my attention to my Bible. I could hardly do it. There was an uneasy stir and excitement of my spirits which I had great trouble to quiet. *Uneasy;* that was it; and I did not know why. I had had nothing but pleasure last night; I could not see why I should be restless this morning; but I was restless. My mind was like a dog that has gone off after the wrong game, and is very hard to bring back again. My hour was running away, and at last with a resolute effort I obliged myself to attend to the business in hand. Nevertheless, even then, in the midst of my reading suddenly I would see the lines of laden camels threading the narrow streets of the bazar, and hear the tinkle of their bells; or there would come before me a panorama of the Alpine glacier, such as my imagination had painted it, very unlike the reality, in all likelihood, but wonderful to me; and the words and the thoughts of

the Bible would be as it were of a sudden obliterated, as if a hand had come between me and them, and swept them away. At last I almost began to think that garden parties must be mischievous things, if they interfere so with one's business. And then the bell rang and I had to go down stairs.

My sister's breakfast table is a delight to me. I never saw anything like it before, except at Mrs. Bowdoin's, all its arrangements and appointments are so pretty and sufficient; and the impression made by the whole is a very harmonious one of comfort, refinement, and a somewhat luxurious habit of wealth. It suits me amazingly. My brother-in-law, too, is not a disturbing element in my pleasure. He is very kind. This morning he demanded to have my report of the party. He had taken us thither, but left us to come home alone, being called elsewhere by business. Now he wanted to have my report of it.

"*I* did not see her from one end of the evening to the other," my sister remarked.

"Well, let us have it, Desire."

"The party, for me, consisted of three gentlemen,"—I began.

"Good. Three parties. Go on."

"The first was rather a dose. The second, I was sure, found me rather a dose. The third—"

"Well, the third?"

"Made me forget all about it."

"All about what?"

"The other two."

My brother-in-law burst out into a hearty but very good-humoured laugh. "That's capital!" said he. "Flattering to the third party!"

"Who was the third gentleman, Desire?" my sister asked.

"His name is Iredell."

"Maximilian Iredell, of Poulteney Place?"

"I don't know what his name is," I returned, "and he did not tell me where he lived."

"It is Maximilian Iredell, of course," said my brother-in-law. "But he is rather an old party, Desire."

"Old?" said I. And something in my accent this time made my sister laugh.

"Yes," said she, "he is old. What did he do to make such a favourable impression on you?"

"He is no older than Mr. Francis, I should judge."

"Francis? Charles Francis? was *he* your 'second,' Desire?" Mr Birkenstall asked.

"Well, Francis is not young either," said my sister. "Poor Desire! you had a pretty stupid beginning of your gayety. Never mind; we'll do better next time."

I thought, I did not wish to do better; but I said nothing.

"What is the next time to be?" said Mr. Birkenstall.

"I am thinking of giving a party myself, Sandie"

"Evening?"

"Certainly. I should like to let Desire have a notion of something a little more lively. Do you dance, Desire?"

"Dance? I? O no."

"Haven't you learned anything about it?"

"I did, when I was at school; but I have never danced since."

"You can soon rub it up again; or kick it up again."

I did not know how to say what I had to say, and so I sat silent and eat my breakfast, while they discussed particulars. They talked of rooms, and music, and numbers, dancing and supper.

"But I do not dance, Caroline," at last I forced myself to say. "You are very kind; but you must not make dancing parties for *me*."

"Why not?" said Mr. Birkenstall.

"You know, our way of life in Chesterfield is quite different."

"From our's here in Philadelphia. Well, when you are in Rome you must do as the Romans do; hey?"

"That's a false principle."

"No, not at all; it's the only way you can go through the world."

"Else you make yourself singular," said Caroline; "and that is always bad taste."

"But you cannot always help it, can you?"

"I know what you are thinking of," said my sister. "You have been brought up in that nar-

row, countrified, stiff way of thinking, which combines everything ungraceful and uncomfortable in the happiest manner. I am not going to have any of that nonsense here, nor to let you make a mope of yourself, as long as you are in my house. I will have the party, and you shall dance at it; and people will compliment me on my sister."

"I am afraid not!" I said laughing; yet I began to feel very uncomfortable.

"What is your notion, Desire?" my brother-in-law asked kindly.

"Never mind her notions," said my sister. "She is a little goose, and she has lived in Chesterfield all her life. I'll take her in hand now."

I had another argument to bring forward, for I knew my wardrobe was utterly unsupplied with all things necessary for social gayeties; but I waited till we were alone. Then I told Caroline I had no dress, nor anything else, fit for a dancing party. Caroline kissed me and said she was glad of it; to dress me would be a pleasure.

"But I have no money, my dear."

"My dear, I have."

I was silenced and half bewildered, and let the matter drop. When I was alone I tried to get my thoughts clear, for they were in confusion. Why shouldn't I dance? why should I not do as others do? It was not that I cared much about it, only I disliked to go against my brother's and sister's kindness. It was more difficult than usual to-day to think consecutively; for again I found images

of glaciers and coffee houses and bazars and mountains and fez caps thronging the chambers of my imagination, and how to make a clearance among them I did not find. Obeying the nearest impulse, I went to my sister's bookcases and sought in them till I found Gibbon's "Decline and Fall." Among so many books that I have not read and ought to read, I thought this might be a good one to begin with; and I brought it to my room, the first volume, and fairly obliged myself to attend to it, and read twenty pages before I was called to go out with Caroline.

Sep. 15.

I AM having the loveliest possible time. Caroline takes me out driving every day and shews me the things I ought to see. And it is just a variety of pleasure, from one day to another.

The weather is beautiful, almost too warm, making all the outside world glorious; while inside the house we are living a quiet, sweet sort of life which pleases me much. I am getting to know my sister and my brother-in-law. Mr. Birkenstall is a quick-witted, cultivated, generous-minded man as ever I saw; and Caroline appreciates him, I think. She is exceedingly kind, and I am rather glad that I hear no more about the party. I do not think parties are in my line. With Gibbon's Decline and Fall I am getting on every day, which is much

better; and I take Layard's Nineveh for a change, and a book of Rambles in the Alps, which is as fascinating as a romance. My world is enlarging every day, and rapidly; and what a pleasant feeling that is. I seem to feel myself grow.

Sep. 17.

ALL of a sudden came a surprise upon me. I was deep in my morning reading, endeavouring to master what I read so as to keep it all in memory; which I suppose after all I cannot do; when in rushed Caroline with a maid behind her carrying an enormous bandbox. The box was put down and the maid was sent away.

"Here it is!" exclaimed my sister gleefully. "Here is your dress. Now quick! let us try it on."

"My dress!" I exclaimed, with no breath to say more.

"Come, child, quick! I am in a fever to see how it will look on you, and if it is all right."

"What dress, Caroline?"

My sister did not answer, and really she had small need; for as she lifted the cover of the great square box, which the girl had untied, there came to view such a mass of white, gauzy, fleecy drapery, with lace and flowers here and there, that it could mean only one thing.

"Have you sent for a dress for me, Caroline?'

I asked dismayed; for I owned no relationship of fitness between that mass of showy material and me for whom it was destined. But my sister would not waste words. She began to take off my morning dress, in order to trying the new one on; nor rested, till she had donned it and fastened it and arranged it, and finished by crowning me with a wreath of shining green leaves. I looked at myself then in a cheval glass, and Caroline looked at me.

"You will do—" said she contentedly.

"Do you think it—*so?*" I asked.

"Don't you like the effect?"

I was silent, gazing at the apparition in the glass.

"You are just lovely," said my sister; "and you know it. O you know it; you dear little quiet mouse, you! And your dress suits you, too."

"But—"

"You need not bring up your dear little grandmotherly scruples. The cost is nothing, child; and Sandie thinks no more of it than I do. You are *his* sister now, besides, you know."

"I am very glad he feels so. But, Caroline, I do think it is money thrown away."

"I'll throw it away, then," said she. "I don't care, if you catch it."

"I am not thinking so much of the money—"

"What are you thinking of? Do you see how charming that wreath is in your hair? and your hair is beautiful under it. Your hair is a great beauty, Desire; it is finer than Olive's. And you

know as well as I do, for you have eyes, that this dress becomes you. My dear, there is a great deal in dress. The men do not know what it is that catches them, but they are caught; and they have simply no idea how largely the net is wrought of lace and ribband that has taken them prisoner."

"But, Caroline, I do not want to catch anybody."

"Of course not. They will be caught quite without your volition."

I looked at the figure in the 'cheval glass, and did not like it. I do not mean I did not like the figure.

"Caroline, I should be better pleased with myself—I should feel more like myself—if you would let me wear that white muslin again."

"That you wore last week? Nonsense. It is good always to give people a variety of impressions. I think you are charming so."

"I do not see, if people want to meet and talk to each other, why they cannot do it in an ordinary nice dress. I am sure I could talk better in that white muslin; that is, supposing I could talk at all."

"People do not come together to talk, you goose."

"What for, then?"

"And besides, on your plan, what would become of the mantua-makers and the shop-keepers? People must dress a little, to make the world look pretty. You will do."

Caroline proceeded to disrobe me, and I pondered. She had touched another thought. How much that

dress had cost. So many dollars; how many I could not tell; and I knew other ways, plenty, in which the money would give me so much pleasure! I grudged it. If Caroline and her husband would spend so much on me, why could it not be in a way that would do me some good? I would have so liked a nice writing desk of some sort. And I wanted much a better Bible than the one I had. And if the present must be in clothes, how good a neat, warm merino would be. I could not say all that, but I could not help thinking it. And I was not clear about the dress on other grounds. Caroline put it back in the box with evident perfect satisfaction on her part. I looked on, doubtful.

"Society ought not to go upon a basis of artificial flowers," I remarked.

"You and I are not the architects to set it upon a more substantial foundation. Now, Desire, you must dance with every one that asks you. Mind that."

"I do not think I shall dance at all."

"You must."

"Why?"

"Everybody does."

"Why do they?"

"It is the way. If you do not dance, you are left out in the cold."

"Left out of what?"

"Out of the world, child."

Caroline kissed me, smiling, and went off. I sat down and tried to get my thoughts together. They

seemed very confused. It was not considered good, among us at Chesterfield, that members of the church should dance. My sister said, that was simple prejudice and ignorance of the world. There *are* such things as prejudice and ignorance of the world, I know; and a little retired country place is just the legitimate home for them. But was she right in the present case? I could not make up my mind. Dancing might be very pleasant, if one could be sure it was right; and Caroline said one might as well scruple to play croquet. I could not make up my mind.

Sep. 20.

THE evening came before I had got any light on the question which troubled me. It was two nights ago. Caroline herself dressed me, and was in a great state of contentment when she had done. She kissed me, gave me a word of praise, and went off to get herself in order. I sat down and tried to think, for before I met the company I must be resolved what I would do. I looked at myself. Lace, gauze, flowers, gloves, slippers, handkerchief; all dainty, delicate, graceful, pretty. Yes, and the effect of the whole was good, and satisfied me, as far as a sense of the beautiful went. But think of the money! In how many ways could the money be better spent. I knew the sum total amounted to a good deal; and my thoughts flew to Chester-

field, to Miss Polly Binninger, our nice, good, poor neighbour, who I *know* cannot keep a fire on her hearth next winter without help, do what she will; and she does all she can. My dress would keep her warm through the whole winter. Then, as Caroline would say, there must be society. True, I suppose, but can there not be society without all this preparation? My dress is one; there will be fifty more like it, and even far more expensive, here to-night; put all that together. Then the supper. I knew, for I had heard my sister and her husband talking about various items. And this is one *little* party, only one; and if the cost of it were differently applied, it would bring health and comfort and rest into half a dozen,—what am I talking of?—into twenty families, where now there is and will be pinching want, driving toil, anxiety and infirmity. Society ought to be very precious, at such a price! I determined I would watch well this evening to see what it really amounted to. But would I dance? that must be decided first.

I thought I could make my observations better if I kept quite cool; and perhaps, if I danced, I might get caught in the whirl of pleasure, and not know what I was doing. Pleasure I believe in, certainly; nobody likes it better; but I could not be quite sure that I should be doing right in taking this pleasure. Well, at last I fixed upon one thing; till I was sure, I would not do it. I would wait, and look on and see.

I was ready when Caroline called me, and together we went down stairs. Sandie surveyed us both and gave us a well-pleased smile.

"Ready for conquest?" said he.

"Why should you say such a thing, Brother Sandie?"

"The thought is so inevitably suggested."

"But the thing is not true. What has society to do with making conquests?"

Mr. Birkenstall laughed. "It is the one end and purpose of society. To make them, or to hinder them, or to secure them. You ladies are all intentionally conquerors; we are the victims."

"That is what we are supposed to dress for, then?" said I. "You know I am an ignoramus, and I want to learn. And what do you mean by making conquests?"

"Surely you know?" said my brother-in-law with a serio-comic face.

"I do not, indeed."

"Let her find out, Sandie."

"No, please answer me," said I. "I am quite in earnest."

"With those blushing cheeks!" said Caroline. "Don't believe her."

"Yes, I am in earnest," I repeated. "I want to know what you mean. I am blushing at the thought of what you *may* mean.'

"Quite right," said Sandie nodding. "I mean that."

"You cannot," said I. "You cannot mean that

any girl would *try* to bring any man to her feet?"

"Any man," said Sandie laconically. "And every man. Some girls try for every man."

He gave me a laughing look, and turned to the guests, who began to come in. Whether he was in earnest or jest I do not know. But I think it is almost worse for a woman to be unwomanly than for a man to be unmanly.

The rooms soon filled with people and with a great hum and chatter. I liked it far less than the garden party. It was not that I had not enough this time to do; for my sister brought plenty of people and introduced them to me; and with every one I had a new beginning of conversation to make. And it is difficult, just at the beginning of a conversation, to get upon any thing interesting. People talked the same things over very frequently; they asked me how long I had been in Philadelphia, and what I had seen, and remarked that I was seeing Philadelphia under favourable auspices; which I knew, but could hardly discuss. They talked about the weather, and compared New York and Philadelphia, at least one man did. The scene would have been pretty, I think, if I could have looked at it with other people's eyes; to mine, I confess, it wanted meaning and purpose. Nobody said anything I wanted to hear; nobody seemed to care about that sort of thing; it was just a glitter and a hum and a fidget of dressed-up figures; and I thought to myself that without the dressing

it would not have been much. No doubt I am a great ignoramus and do not understand things. When the dancing began, of course I was asked to join in it; but I said I would rather look on for a while, and so I got a chance to make my observations. At first I had so many petitions to dance that I could do nothing but ward them off; then by and by I slipped somewhat aside, in the shadow of a window curtain, and then could look and think a little. The dancing was a curious spectacle to my unaccustomed eyes. All were joining in it, not the younger people alone; I saw tolerably stout ladies standing gravely up opposite to young things like myself, and going through some extraordinary movements with more or less care; not *dancing* at all, but walking or tripping to measure, though indeed they did not always take care of the measure; and in intervals chatting with their partners. Faces wore smiles, universally, yet I could not fancy that most of the people were having any great enjoyment. Between the smiles, I thought I could read so much. I questioned myself, what had I, Desire Burgoyne, to do with such an entertainment? I, whose home and life in a little country village are so different. What sense is there in my being attired in gauze and lace, when at home I must go back to homespun? And the gauze and lace are prettier, but I would just as lieve wear the homespun, for I can do my work in it better. And if this is society, I do not think I shall lose much. My talk the other night, on the

seat by the water, with Mr. Iredell,—that was another matter! I *would* like a little more of such society. But perhaps it would spoil me for the place where my life must be; for there is nothing like that in Chesterfield. And I am here in Philadelphia for only a little while, perhaps only for this once. It would be very foolish in me to lose my heart to this sort of elegant, merry, careless life, even if I could; and I like another sort of life better. Not that at Chesterfield exactly; I cannot help seeing that that is narrow, and I will make mine as wide as I can.

I was thinking what means I could apply to this end, for truly I did not immediately know, when the current of my thoughts was changed. A face I knew and was glad to see again, came very near me; even Mr. Iredell's own. He came very near, without at all seeing me or knowing I was there; for the white lace curtain shrouded my white gauze, I standing just in the recess of the window; and he came and placed himself leaning against the wall just at the other side of the window, with folded arms looking on at the crowd as, without folded arms, I had been doing. I was in the shade and unseen, and I looked at him now. I had had no such good chance before. I knew him enough to recognize him, to be sure, and yet his face as seen now in perfect repose and gravity seemed almost like another face. He stood motionless, very grave, in a careless attitude leaning against the corner of the window recess; and I

tried to read him. But it is difficult to read people. Looks and characteristics may be so easily misinterpreted. This was like no other face I ever saw, and I may say this was like no other figure. The quiet strength and ease of the outlines I thought I could not read wrong; strength both physical and moral. He is rather a large man, of powerful frame, and well supplied with muscle; and there was all the ease of both sorts of strength in his position and air, and the grace of both in the somewhat thrown-back head. His face, I thought, was the handsomest I had ever seen. The more I looked, the more I thought so. It had the same characteristics, strength and calm; while it was at the same time the gravest face I ever saw. I do not mean sorrowful or gloomy, in the very least; only grave. Like the face of one who habitually looked through things and saw what they meant; and I would have given something to know his thoughts at the moment upon what had occupied mine. The features of this face were beautifully chiselled, but somewhat massive; the brow strong; the hair thick and wavy and pushed back carelessly; the eyes and mouth, as I said, grave, but very calm, and indicating a world of power and character. I looked and looked, and Mr. Iredell never moved. It came over me to wonder that this man should have taken the trouble to talk to me as he did the other night. Yes, he was not a young man, not *very* young, that is; he had seen something of life and taken his part in it, that was

plain. I wished he would find me out, but I hardly dared breathe for fear I should help him to the discovery. And I do not know what ever made him at last look my way, for I am certain I had not stirred to make the least noise; yet suddenly he turned and met my eyes full. I felt ashamed, and he started from his position.

"In hiding!" he exclaimed.

"Something like it,"—I answered.

"May one ask, what you are hiding from?" he said laughing.

"It is a fair question, Mr. Iredell. I suppose I ought to answer, if I can. You know, I am a country girl. All this is a new scene to me. I was willing, if I could, to get a one side a little and look at it quietly, and make up my mind about it. And besides, I wanted to get out of the way of invitations to dance."

"You do not dance? How happens that?"

"I have not made up my mind about it."

"Whether you will or not?"

"Whether I ought."

"That is a doubt very few people share."

"My friends here say the doubt is narrow, and arises from prejudice only; because I have been brought up so."

"And you wanted to make up your own judgment? How is it you are not taking the general method, which is, to do a thing first, and consider it afterwards; that is, supposing the time for consideration ever comes."

"Is that the general method?"

"How comes it not to be yours?"

"I do not know. I suppose,—because,—I cannot take pleasure in a thing if I am in doubt about it."

"Is the ground of your doubt in the present case simply education? as you say, being brought up so?"

I hesitated, for he was not dancing himself; I presumed that he shared my doubt, and why should he care to know the ground of it. I hesitated, but everyone knows there are a few people in the world to whom the impulse to talk out is very irresistible. Since Mr. Iredell paid me the compliment of asking the question, why should not I pay him the compliment of answering it?

"I think my doubt lies here," said I. "You will not laugh at me, and perhaps you can help me. I cannot get over these words—'Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' I cannot see how I can do *this* 'in his name.'"

"By 'in his name,' you mean—?"

"I hardly know how to put it. 'In his name must mean *for him* somehow; as his servant, I suppose; doing his work."

Mr. Iredell looked at me, a look I did not comprehend; somewhat considering and fixed, but not at all unpleasant.

"And whatsoever you do, you wish to do it as his servant, doing his work?" said he.

"Yes, certainly."

"So do I."

"Then do you think I am mistaken? or can you make me wiser in the matter? You do not dance yourself?"

He did not answer immediately. At the moment there came a whirl of waltzers by, and we both looked on. Pair after pair, white, blue, and golden coloured draperies flew and flashed before us, each embraced by a black coat sleeve; air and attitude and manner varied in different cases, but while some were graceful and some ungraceful, I confess all were bewildering to me.

"I can *not* see what is the pleasure of that," I ventured.

"You are mistaken," said Mr. Iredell; "it has its pleasure, far more than the languid quadrille. I speak from experience. The matching of movement and measure, the excitement of music and motion together, are exceedingly intoxicating."

"It looks senseless," said I. "People turned into animated tops!"

"That is an unsophisticated view of it," said my companion smiling. "Don't tell anybody else. Come down to the refreshment room and let me get you something, and I will tell you what I have seen."

That was a promise which would have drawn me much further. He gave me his arm, and we went through the crowd, winding our way out among the moving and swaying, floating and surging people, and got down stairs to the dining-room.

Here the table was set, and people came and went as they pleased; just now the room was almost empty. My companion gave me a seat and put a plate of salad in my hand, which I took just that I might have something to do while I listened. But he seemed to have forgotten his promise, until I reminded him.

"A man can easily make himself a bore by telling all the things he has seen," he remarked.

"Not to me," said I, "for I have seen nothing. It is all new."

"I think you told me this is your first visit to Philadelphia."

"Yes; or to any city. I have sometimes gone into Boston, when I was at school near there; but only for a few hours."

"I am interested to know how it strikes you."

"It strikes me with the sense of what a little corner of the world I have lived in, and always shall live in, most likely. After what you were telling me the other night at the garden party, I began to feel what a large place the world is."

"It is a large place," said he.

"It must be very pleasant to know it, as you do."

"And it seems to me very pleasant, *not* to know it,—as you do."

"Because I may have the pleasure of learning?"

"It is better not to know some things," he said, looking at me kindly.

"I hope what you were going to tell me is not one of them?"

"No," said he smiling; "and yet it is a story about dancing. You remarked up stairs that the waltz looked to you *senseless*. I believe most things have significance, one way or another, and even a waltz is no exception. I was going to tell you how much meaning dancing may have and express. I saw this a long while ago, in Europe—"

"How d'ye do, Mr. Iredell," said a soft voice near at hand. I looked up, in disagreeable surprise that anybody should venture to interrupt a conversation so wantonly; but I found it seemed to be quite in order. The fair speaker had no conscience of rudeness, or if she had she did not shew it. Mr. Iredell bowed. He had remained standing, when I sat down. Now I expected that he would introduce me; but he did not. The disturber of my pleasure was a fair creature, a young girl, looking perhaps younger than she was. Her hair, of shining black, was dressed in thick curls falling down upon neck and shoulders. Neck and shoulders were very white. Her dress, heavy and rich, was black, only relieved by lace; and her eyes were as bright and as black as two berries, or as two black diamonds. She stood and looked at Mr. Iredell, I thought, as if she liked him. I could not help the impression.

"I thought you never went to parties?" she began, challenging him.

"Yet you see,—here I am."

"But you do not dance?"

"I do not dance."

"Then what are you here for? that is what I want to know."

"It seems to you there is nothing to be done but dancing."

"You are not eating, or drinking; and I do not suppose you care for it. Get me a cup of coffee, please."

While Mr. Iredell was doing this, the stranger surveyed me; not staringly, not rudely, but with one sweeping comprehensive glance of her bright eyes which took in, I thought, all there was of me. Accepting the coffee, she continued.

"I thought you never went in for nonsense, even sweet nonsense?"

"I don't know the article."

"O that's a white lie! What else do you get here?"

"Not that, I assure you."

"You don't expect sense; nobody talks sense at a dance; they *can't* you know; how can they, hopping round? And you don't like anything but sense; so I don't see what you came for. What *did* you?"

"Is your coffee right?"

"Better than your politeness. Why don't you answer me?"

"I suppose, because you are not a judge."

"A judge of what?"

"Of me."

"I am, though. I can't help judging people, and

you can't. I came here for something, and you came here for something; and if it wasn't pleasure, I am curious to know what it was."

"I never said it was not pleasure."

"No, but there is only one sort of pleasure to be had here, and that is a sort you don't like. What were you talking about? This is Mrs. Birkenstall's sister, I know. Introduce me, please."

"Miss Burgoyne, this lady is Miss Forella."

"I am very glad to meet you," said the young lady easily. "Mrs. Birkenstall promised to introduce me, but I had no opportunity to claim her promise. Is this horrid man keeping you from dancing?"

"No," said I, extremely astonished.

"You must not mind anything he says. He don't dance himself, so, you see, he cries sour grapes. Dear me, if I minded Mr. Iredell! there would be nothing left in life. Not a thing. All the 'sweet nonsense' which he doesn't believe in, you see, I live upon. I am a kind of a butterfly, and butterflies live on honey, don't they? if they don't, I don't know what they do live on. But what's life good for? Now stop! don't begin to tell me what it is good for, because we don't agree. *I* believe people are meant to be happy, and enjoy themselves.

"Honestly, do you manage to accomplish that?" said Mr. Iredell. "Now I do."

"I enjoy myself ever so much," said the girl with a look at him. "Don't you think I do?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"When people are happy, they usually look so."

"And I don't look happy? What do you think of Miss Burgoyne? does she?

"Judge for yourself."

Miss Forella surveyed me again, with a little more consideration; and something in the look was not comfortable, was not pleasant to me. I did not know then and I do not know now, what it was.

"Has he been telling you dancing is nonsense?" she asked.

"On the contrary," said Mr. Iredell. "I was just about to tell Miss Burgoyne how much meaning there may be in dancing."

"Meaning in dancing? There is never any meaning in my dancing; only fun."

"I did not intend to describe your dancing."

"Whose, then?"

Mr. Iredell named a name which I did not understand. Miss Forella did not know it either. He explained that it had belonged to a very famous public dancer in Europe, some years ago.

"And you saw her!" cried Miss Forella, while the black eyes twinkled.

"I saw her. I would not venture to describe such a scene upon hearsay."

"And are you going to describe to us her dancing?"

"If you will listen to me."

"I'll be delighted. But the idea! The grave Mr. Iredell, who does not believe in sweet nonsense, describing to the gay Miss Forella, who swallows all she can get, a specially sweet bit of special nonsense! It's delightful. I'm ready. Go on."

"You do not know what I am going to give you."

"It's about a ballet dancer and her dancing."

"I told you, it was dancing with a meaning to it."

"I never heard of such a thing before. But go on."

"First, please," said I—"What is a *ballet dancer?*'

"Why, did you never see a ballet?"

"No," said Mr. Iredell. "She does not know what you mean. She never went to the theatre."

"Poor creature! Well—you cannot tell her."

"I will try. Miss Burgoyne, a ballet is a dramatic dance—in which the play of feeling is supposed to find its expression and delineation in the play of feet; rather, in the swaying movements of the whole person."

"But I should think that is impossible," said I. "How can dancing express feeling?"

"It can, and does, however. Many nations, both in ancient and modern times, have had special national dances; which were simply expressions of a certain set of feelings, more or less gracefully, more or less skilfully given."

"You mean an Indian war dance," said Miss Forella. "I don't call that a dance."

"It is one sort, indulged in by many tribes of the like range of civilization; and it is very significant of meaning. The Indian bayaderes and Egyptian dancing girls belong to another sort, and suit a different condition of national life. Among the Hebrews of old, dancing was an expression of religious joy, when the men and the women danced separately; when they danced together, it was an outburst of riotous revelry, connected with no religion but that of the heathen. The Russians have a dance, a pas de deux, which mimics the whole course of a courtship; the girl's shy coquetry and the man's bold wooing; the Cossacks have another which displays the men's skill at arms and the woman's address with her particular weapons. The old English minuet was something of the same sort in another style. And in the ballet dancing of a trained artiste, if she be a genius, the art reaches its height."

"I never saw anything like that," said Miss Forella looking at him curiously.

"I have."

"Well, go on and tell us about it. But I forewarn you beforehand,—I don't believe it."

"What do you not believe?"

"All this. I don't believe dancing *can* mean anything."

"Then my story would be thrown away on you."

"Stories never are thrown away on me. Ah, go on! I am dying to hear it."

Mr. Iredell smiled and went on, but he looked rather at me, as seeing that I did believe it.

"I was—no matter where, and no matter when. It was at a grand theatre in one of the principal cities on the Continent. The piece was a peculiar one—I have forgotten the name of it—and it does not matter. The famous artiste charmed me at first by her grace and beauty and skill, yet the impression was light. I had seen grace and skill before, though perhaps never in equal exercise. However, in the early part of the piece the sentiment to be expressed was gay and joyous, suitable to the medium of expression. Afterwards all that changed. The heroine of the piece was supposed to be dead—"

"*Supposed*, do you mean? it was a mistake?"

"It was not a mistake. She was dead, in the play."

"Then she could not dance any more."

"You would think so, wouldn't you?"

"Well, how could she?"

"I do not know. The scene was a graveyard—"

"By night?"

"Yes, moonlight; clear moonlight, with deep shadows cast by the stones and trees."

"What a dreadful idea!"

"And there, one by one, we saw the ghosts of the young girls of the village who were buried in the churchyard, rise from their graves and begin to dance."

"How were they dressed, pray?"

"In ghostly white garments."

"It is the most dreadful thing I ever heard of. You *saw* them rise?"

"Out of their graves, one after another. Then the heroine of the piece came, the last one who had been laid there. I can never forget *how* she came; the skill of it was consummate. Slowly, with features at first fixed and rigid, as if she were not fully awake yet from the sleep of the grave; and then that expression passed and gave place to a look of life, and her dancing began; and anything more expressive of the soft, sad longing supposed to be felt by the departed spirit on returning to visit its earthly haunts, it is impossible to conceive. The slow grace, the tender lingering, the lost love, were all there, and one's eyes and one's heart were alike riveted. For she had a lover left on the earth."

"He ought to have been there."

"He was there."

"And what did he do?"

"Danced."

"Heartless!"

"On the contrary. Words could hardly have spoken plainer, or have been more mournful or more passionate or more powerful than were the movements of both of them. The ghost made all efforts to induce her lover to go with her."

"Where?"

"Back into the grave, whither she must return when the clock struck."

"But that was very selfish!"

"We are talking of dancing," said Mr. Iredell smiling. "And nothing more expressive of longing, of affection, of entreaty, anxiety, and despair, can be imagined than her movements were; nothing more passionate than her appeals; nothing more sad than her outstretched arms in pleading, as she slowly at last sank out of sight. Tears were certainly on very many faces; I am sure they were on mine."

"I never heard anything like it in my life!" was Miss Forella's comment.

"Nothing more perfect in its kind can be imagined."

"But I think it is very strange," said I at last, "that she should endeavour to take her lover out of life because she was going herself."

"You do not think that a natural selfishness?" said Mr. Iredell smiling.

"No. If people are true and their affection is true, they desire not their own pleasure but another person's."

"You think she ought to have wished her lover to live and be happy with somebody else?" said Mr. Iredell.

"I don't know about 'with somebody else,'"—I answered doubtfully. Whereat Miss Forella burst into a fit of laughter, "at my grave face," she said; and seemed excessively amused. Then she asked Mr. Iredell what he told me that story for?

"To reward her for not dancing."

"And me?"

"I did not tell it to you."

"Why not?" said she pouting. "And are you going to keep Miss Burgoyne down here all the evening to prevent her from dancing?"

"Don't let me keep you," said he with courtly politeness.

"I declare! That is as much as to say, I am not worth the trouble."

"Nothing is worth the trouble, that will not repay it."

"Would it be any gratification to you if you could keep me down here too? without dancing?"

"I am sure you would be only gathering strength to dance the harder on the next opportunity?"

"If I go away, I am afraid you will tell Miss Burgoyne something else entertaining. But I must go, all the same. I have a great deal to do up stairs, before the evening is over. By the way, do you know, I think your curious ballet dancer has some successors among the living. Haven't I seen a girl try to dance her lover back, when he had forsaken her? and haven't I seen a girl dance away another girl's lover? Haven't I done it!"

"Don't be harder on yourself than the truth," said Mr. Iredell. "Miss Burgoyne does not know your manner of speech."

"Nor my manner of action, does she? Miss Burgoyne, it is true. I have danced away another girl's beloved, and I meant to do it. Now do you believe me?"

I looked at her, and said yes. She laughed again, seemingly delighted.

"Life's a game," said she. "And society's a game. We are all players, only *some of us win.*"

"What are you playing for?" said Mr. Iredell

"Fun—" she answered instantly.

"It is a pity to play a desperate game for what you cannot keep," Mr. Iredell answered gravely. "Do you know, that little drama I tried to describe to you, is reproduced behind the scenes very often?"

"Now don't preach!" said the girl. "I never like you when you preach. I hate preaching, and what's the use? I ain't going to stop dancing."

"You cannot dance always," he returned with a smile, which was still grave.

"Then I'll die! Don't preach to Miss Burgoyne either, and make her as poky as yourself. Miss Burgoyne, don't you be persuaded to be goody, goody! I'm going." And away she flitted. I was in so great astonishment at her whole manner that I was dumb; anything like this I had never so much as imagined; and doubted now I had seen it. My companion looked after her soberly, but then he smiled at me.

"I must take you back to the world above stairs," he said.

"Yes," I answered. "I am sorry. It is not so easy to talk there."

"Have you seen all that there is to be seen in and around Philadelphia?"

"O no. Neither the one nor the other. Caroline

and I have been very busy, but we have not gone out of the city, except once or twice."

"Will you let me shew you some of our pretty drives? Can you go to-morrow afternoon? Let us take advantage of the fine weather."

The good part of the evening was done for me when we got back into the midst of the dancing and Mr. Iredell left me; indeed he left the house, I knew. And yet, I should not say the good part was gone, for the arrangement he had made about driving gave me continual pleasure through whatever else I was doing; and I might say I enjoyed it all after that. However, I must say, that if this is society, I do not think much of it. There was a kind of soft hubbub in the rooms; a buzz and a rustle; or there was the noise of the violins and harp and the vision of a moving throng, changing places to a regular beat and measure; rising and falling, shifting and passing. It was not easy then to talk; but sometimes I had to talk. My sister introduced people to me, who thought they must say something, I suppose. Among them came Mr. Francis.

"You do not dance?" said he smoothly. "Religious scruples?"

"Is it so singular that one should prefer to sit still?"

"When a lady has the foot of a fairy and the form of a Grace, she generally—likes to shew it."

"And is *that* what you call society?" said I.

Mr. Francis shrugged his shoulders. "Not entirely," said he. "Society is largely flirting."

"What do you mean by flirting?"

"What do *you* mean by it?" said he laughing.

"We, in the country, mean by it something disgraceful."

"Not at all," said Mr. Francis. "Not at all! We in the city understand by the word a pleasant sort of fencing;—a lively practising of one's weapons, in preparation for the earnest duel of life. Buttons on the foils of course; if once in a while the guard gets off and some one is hit, why the danger only serves to make the play earnest and spirited for the rest. Seriously, did you never flirt?"

I did not know what to say to the man. A Sandwich Islander and I would have had more in common. He could not understand me, I knew; and in so far as I understood I disliked him. Yet he had qualities, I am sure, that might have made him different; might have made him likeable.

"You do not agree with me?" said he softly. "Or perhaps you are shocked?"

I was in doubt how to answer. I believe I coloured. I do that easily, I am afraid.

"The best thing I can give you is silence," I said. "Why should you also be shocked?"

He declared that he was never shocked; he had got beyond that; he thanked heaven he had seen too much of the world.

"Is nothing serious to you?" I asked. "Do you take nothing in earnest?"

"Always!" he said; a lady's displeasure was always very earnest to him,—when it *was* earnest.

And a queer little smile offended me; it seemed to say, with some vanity, that it never was earnest towards him.

"And now," said he, a little more deferentially, "I have incurred yours!"

"No,' said I, "I have no right. But if I were your sister, I should be very sorry for you."

"Pray tell me why!"

"Because, with all you have seen of the world, you have never found out happiness."

"How do you know?"

"By your own shewing, you have found nothing that is not hollow."

I was vexed that he only laughed at this.

"Happiness is a roc's egg," said he.

"No," said I. "The roc's egg could not be found."

And here up came my sister and carried me off. "What do you talk with that man for?" said she. "You are no match for him. Mrs. Sandwich, this is my sister."

I was made to sit down beside a stately lady in brown satin, who reviewed me.

"You are a very handsome family, my dear!" was her opening remark. I replied, of course, I was glad she thought so.

"Well, don't *you* think so?" said she smiling. "Don't you admire your sister?"

"I have a handsomer sister at home," said I incautiously.

"Ah, indeed! Married?"

"No, unmarried."

"Your mother is living?"

"No."

"Father?"

"No, ma'am."

"Whom do you live with?"

"My grandmother is with us."

"'Us'—that is, your sister and you?"

"Yes."

"Do you live in Boston?"

"No; in the country."

"Yes, the country near Boston, isn't it?"

"Not very near; it is more than a day's journey.

"Quite a country place then, is it?"

"Quite. A country village."

"You must be without a great many advantages there?"

"Of what sort?"

"Have you much society?"

"Not like this—" said I, looking at the waltzers as they flew by.

"No, I presume not. And that is a great loss."

I wondered, was it?

"What society have you?" my interlocutor went on.

"What I like best," said I, "is a game of blind man's buff in a barn, or a nutting party in the woods; if you have the right sort of people."

"The great difficulty in all society," said she. "When you have got that, you have got all. Do describe to me your country society; I should like

to know what your 'right sort of people' are; they are so hard to come by here."

Describe our people I would not, however; and she got little enlightenment from the rest of my answers. Indeed she complained to that effect.

"Is not life very monotonous, in such a country place?"

"We do not often have anything startling happen."

"No; and one grows so rusty! It was a very good thing for your sister to bring you here. I hope you will make a long stay."

I smiled to myself, and Mrs. Sandwich's eye roved over the moving crowd. *I* thought Mr. Iredell was well out of it. Then she turned to me again.

"Aren't you dancing, my dear?"

"I do not dance."

"Never learned? O that makes no difference; you would soon pick it up. I'll find a partner for you." And she stirred.

"Don't," said I; "it is not in my line. I do not wish to dance, indeed."

"But it is very stupid to sit still while everybody else is moving."

"I can bear it."

"My dear, why don't you take a few lessons, then, if that is what hinders you. Young people should dance; you would find it very pleasant; and it rubs off that rust we were speaking of."

I could not tell her I preferred to remain rusty. Here again, there was no one thing in common

between us. I was glad when she moved away, and I was glad when the evening was over and I could go up stairs and take off my finery and be myself again. Except my talk in the supper room, and it was not *half* so good as a nutting party

Sep. 29.

I WAS a little later than usual this morning, but so was the whole household, and I lost nothing. Our beautiful weather had departed. Before I got up I could hear the rain thrashing against the panes, and the wind whistling and blowing. However, the air was quite warm, and as soon as I was dressed I set open my glass door; for the wind was from an opposite quarter and drove the storm from and not towards it. I sat down with my Bible, and looked and listened. Hearing I know not what utterance of the wind and the rain; they seemed to say something; and I tried to interpret the language, so wild and sweet at once. It was a storm in earnest; the wind blew hard, carrying sheets of rain-drops past me; they dashed upon brick wall and stone pavement with a pure, clear, soft clatter, which was inexpressibly musical to me. The sky was all grey clouds; the houses were seen under a grey watery veil; the iron railings of my balcony dripped incessantly with wet; and I, sheltered and dry and safe, watched it all with a feeling of calmest content. There was

a sort of ripple of comfort in my heart; which presently swelled and flowed to a sea of happiness, in the consciousness that I am Christ's and that I know him.

What is all other knowledge worth in the world! and what is any life, the centre and soul of which he is not! And I, ignorant as I am in the world's ways, narrow as my sphere is, "rusty" as I may be, I have this knowledge, and the love of him possesses me. And I am so glad, so glad,—so deeply content, so quietly secure and satisfied, that I can only long that other people should know what I know and have what I have. Yes, and to make them know it, is precisely the charge and commission that Christ has given his people. It is difficult! How for instance can I? Take Caroline for example; she does not understand me when I speak of religion; my words are Hebrew to her; worse; for Hebrew she would believe covered some sense, and she does not accord any such honour to my utterances upon this subject. Probably they are dull and awkward. But I made up my mind, as I sat there before my glass door and watched the rain, that whatever else in this world I did, I would *try* to do my Lord's work. "Seek first the kingdom" —he said; and I will. I will let nothing else come before it. And then I prayed to be taught and led, how to do.

I went down to a late breakfast, and found spirits out of tune.

"What a horrid day!" my sister said.

"But you had a good night for your company; so it does not matter," I remarked.

"Everything on the table is cold. I wonder how long the breakfast has waited?"

"I will make you a piece of toast. Ring for some fresh tea."

"Desire seems to have kept *her* energies," said my brother-in-law. "What is your recipe for mental brightness, Desire?"

"Desire did not dance a step last night."

"I know she didn't. Why, Desire?"

"There's a piece of toast for you, Sandie, if you will be good."

"And hold my tongue? Well, the toast is good, —capital. I never saw such a good bit of toast."

"Desire is not good," said my sister. "How can I do anything for her, if she will not dance?"

"What do you want to do for her?" Sandie asked, eating his toast with relish.

"I want to give her advantages."

"Well, you have," said I. "I have learned loads of things since I have been here; things I shall never forget."

"How much are you the better for that? and pray, what have you learned?"

"Caroline, I have had more fun talking, both these times, then you have had dancing. Indeed, to judge by your looks this morning, you have not had a very good time at all. Now I had."

"Such weather!" murmured Caroline. "Horrid Talking to whom?"

"The nicest talker I have seen, is Mr. Iredell. I think he is the best talker I ever saw in my life."

"Mr. Iredell! He's too old for you, child"

"Too old to talk to me?" said I making big eyes.

"I am not going to have that!" said my sister. "I won't ask Iredell any more while you are here."

"Why, pray?"

"He keeps you from dancing."

"Then he does a very good thing, in my opinion. But he does not keep me from dancing, Caroline. I cannot make up my mind that it would be right for me to dance."

"Right?" said my brother-in-law. "Why not right, Desire? What can be the wrong in it?"

"I don't know if I could make you understand."

"Try, at least. I may be dull, but I will do my best."

I had been toasting slices of bread for both of them, which both seemed to enjoy. I faced about now and stood up, with the toasting-fork in my hand.

"Brother Sandie—I am a Christian."

"She looks like it!" said Caroline. "With the martyr's instrument of torture in her hand."

"Hush," said Sandie; then turning to me,—"So am I, Desire, I hope; and so is Caroline. And we both dance. And I could name you fifty more."

"That makes it look strange," said I. "But I cannot forget—you know the words—'Whatso-

ever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' I cannot see how I can do *that* 'in his name.'"

"What do you call doing it 'in his name'? Hush, Caroline—let her alone. I want to understand. I don't understand, Desire. Always let people talk out, my dear, and don't choke them off. You have a better chance of getting at their meaning, if they have one. So let us hear, Desire."

"I have a meaning," said I. "I do not know if I can make it intelligible."

"Let us hear, at any rate."

"A Christian is, a servant of Christ."

"Granted. Well?"

"He is the servant of Christ everywhere and at all times, and does everything *as* his servant. That is what I mean by 'in his name.'"

"Wait, Caroline," said Mr. Birkenstall, for Caroline wanted to burst in. "Let me get the bearings of the case. Why, Desire, most servants take a play time now and then, when they can get it; what should make your service an exception?"

"Only the Master's command," said I.

"A command not to play?"

"No, no! But this command—'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'"

"That seems to me a general order."

"It seems to me particular."

"But see, Desire; try it. How *can* you eat and drink to the glory of God?"

I pondered a little, standing there still with the toasting-fork in my hand. I had not wanted to get into this discussion; yet I saw now only one way out of it. I guessed ridicule before me, perhaps displeasure; but however, what matter? *Here* too I was on duty.

"Suppose," I began slowly and thinking of instances, "suppose I eat more than is good for me?"

Mr. Birkenstall laughed a little, granting, I saw, that instance.

"Suppose I eat what I know will make me dull and heavy and unfit for work?"

My brother-in-law nodded.

"Suppose I spend upon that, upon the pleasure of my palate, the money that is needed by others?"

"What others?"

"Starving people, and sick people, and tired people, and ignorant people, and homeless people?"

"But, my child,—wait, Caroline, be patient a moment,—you cannot reach all those."

"Isn't that a reason, just that fact, why I should not waste a dollar? if my dollars are so far too few.

"Where *did* you get such notions?" cried my sister.

"Let her alone a bit. Desire—let us look into this. You cannot, as I said, relieve all the world."

"No, Brother Sandie; I cannot even relieve all I know."

"And therefore this occurs to me. It cannot be your *duty* to relieve all the world. Other people have their share of the burden."

"What then? they don't do it."

"You cannot do it for them. If you do your part, that is all that can be demanded of you, by heaven or earth."

"Brother Sandie, what is *my part?*"

"According to circumstances," my brother-in-law answered, smiling again. "I should say, a reasonable contribution from your means and your time."

"But the Bible does not say that."

"What does it say?"

"It says, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' And it says, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you'—"

"But my dear—"

"That is that dreadful old Puritan doctrine!" exclaimed my sister. "It is as stupid as it is stiff. That is what I want you to help me break Desire of, Sandie; if she don't get cured of it, she is utterly ruined."

"Patience," said my brother-in-law again. "My wits do not move as fast as yours. On that principle, Desire, where would you draw the line?"

"What line, Brother Sandie?"

"I mean, where would you stop?"

"If you and your family were starving, where would you like to have me stop feeding you?"

"But, my dear, as we were saying, your hand cannot feed everybody."

"No. Shall I leave you then, starving, and half brought back to life, and spend a dollar on a bunch of grapes for my own dessert?"

"Do hear her, Sandie! Regular Communism!"

"You might need the grapes yourself, Desire."

"If I need them, or the money, more than you do, then of course the case is changed."

"And if I need it more than you do—?"

"I think you ought to have it. Don't you?"

"I think you would be a nice person to have around if one was in trouble!" said Sandie, finishing his toast.

"Giving entertainments of course is condemned!" said my sister in much evident displeasure. "We certainly ought not to have parties any more."

"What do you think, Desire?" my brother-in-law asked composedly. "What is your opinion of that? There was more than one bunch of grapes on our supper-table last night."

"I did not know it, Brother Sandie. I did not see them."

"But you do not answer me? It cost more than one dollar to pay the fiddlers."

I was silent. My sister reddened. Mr. Birkenstall on the other hand was quite cool and perfectly good-natured. But I did not want to answer this question! I felt sure neither of them would like me so well for ever after. However, I had no choice. Mr. Birkenstall waited for me to speak, and would not allow my sister to prevent me. It had to come.

"I would rather answer you in words not my own," I said slowly. "You know whose words they are,—'When thou makest a dinner or a supper

call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.'"

Mr. Birkenstall looked at me very attentively, calmly, I thought also, with a little wonder.

"Do you take those words literally?"

"How else?"

"And you would never make an entertainment for your friends?"

"Yes, a little entertainment."

"Not a large one?"

"Yes, I would make great entertainments if I could; but for those who need them, *not* for those who can return them."

"We must new furnish our houses, then," said Caroline. "*This* sort of thing would not answer." And she handled a painted tea-cup as she spoke; and glanced up at the mantel-piece. "No need of great mirrors either, to reflect and duplicate images of misery. And delicate cookery would be quite out of place. We should go back to pork and cabbage; back to barbarism generally."

"I don't know," said I. "What some of those people specially want, is nice things to eat."

"Imagine it, Sandie!" said my sister in a sort of despair turning from me. "It is absolute fanaticism Here we have a social iconoclast."

"But what do the words mean?" said I.

"Can you suppose, dear Desire," said my brother-in-law gently, "that they are meant to institute an overthrowing of all the forms and customs of society?—for that would follow."

"O let her alone!" said Caroline. "This is what I get for the trouble I took yesterday. I am told it is wicked to do such things. Desire might have informed me earlier."

"How could I, before I knew what your parties were like?" said I, feeling very miserable. "I am just opening my eyes upon things for the first time; and you asked me to speak. I did not volunteer it, nor wish it."

"Pray do not ask her to speak any more, Sandie. *I* have got enough."

"Sit down and eat your breakfast, Desire," my brother-in-law said very kindly. "Here have you been toasting and talking, and have eaten next to nothing. Sit down, and we will dispute no more; till you have extended the range of your observations somewhat."

I commanded myself and tried to make a seeming of going on with my breakfast. Caroline presently left the table and the room; and Mr. Birkenstall soon followed, being obliged to go to his business. He took pleasant leave, patting me on the shoulder and telling me I had a great deal to learn yet. I dropped knife and fork when I was alone, and turned from the table. Everything seemed to have grown dark. The rain beating and splashing upon

the window panes, a little while before had given emphasis to the cosy brightness and warmth and comfort in my room and in my heart; now it had got the upper hand. I turned from the table and sat before the glowing grate, trying where to find a little comfort again. My sister I knew very much displeased and disappointed; she had said so; and it grieved me deeply. For all her tender care and generous kindness, I had made a return which *disappointed* her. I think, if anything is cruelly painful, it is, to disappoint somebody. And I could not mend the breach, that I could see, or heal the disappointment. I could take back nothing. I could see things in no other light than that which had proved so discomposing. Caroline and I belonged to two different worlds; and mine naturally did not suit her. Perhaps I was wrong; mistaken; and yet,—how could it be? there were the words, and many other words, which came trooping after them into my mind. And just then my thoughts took a sudden leap. I had been so sorry to disappoint Caroline; it would be a worse thing to disappoint my Saviour. Not that! my heart cried; anything but that! Rather lose all and offend everybody, than displease or disobey him. And so there my thoughts settled; and though my tears rained down for a minute or two, they were tears, in part, of joy; of a joyful offering of myself to him. If I only do *his* will, and do it lovingly, I don't care what I meet in the way.

So I went up stairs very quiet. Only now I

was sorry for the rain which would keep Mr Iredell from coming to take me to drive as he had promised.

Sep. 25.

THINGS went on quietly for a few days. My brother-in-law was as pleasant as ever. I could not say so much for my sister; she was more cool and disengaged in her manner towards me; and seemed, I thought, in a fashion, to have given me up. Or perhaps she fancied that this cool sort of displeasure would have its effect upon me. It did indeed, if not just the effect she wished for. Those days we kept at home, and went to see nothing. The rain lasted for several of them; and when the sunshine came again I naturally looked to have Mr. Iredell appear to perform his promise; however, he came not; and I looked in vain. So it was more of a temptation than it would otherwise have been, when I was invited to spend the evening with Miss Forella. I had seen her in the interval several times; she professed a liking for me, and certainly busied herself a good deal with me. She was gay, good-humoured, queer; a study to me; and I was rather glad to go. I was invited to dinner.

The house I found very handsome, handsomer than my sister's; rooms large and lofty, and filled with luxury in every available form. To my not

agreeable surprise, I found that Miss Forella's mother was the lady who had questioned me so the night of my sister's party. Her name was Sandwich by a second marriage, from which she was again left a widow. This lady welcomed me now with a sort of condescending air, and at the same time with a reviewing glance which, I felt, did not approve what it saw. I was in my black silk, which indeed is very simply made, and my hair was simply dressed; I was something of a contrast to her daughter's puffs and furbelows and embroideries and elaborate coiffure; and to confess the truth, I thought the advantage was not all on her side.

"I've brought her!" said my gay entertainer. "There she is, as large as life;—*and no larger*. She disapproves of crinoline."

"I never said so—" I began to protest.

"O yes, you do; in the plainest manner. Mr. Francis, I am very glad to see you. Now you are a judge. Decide between Miss Burgoyne and me, —the rival claims of nature and art. Which do you prefer? The question is crinoline."

So there was Mr. Francis again, entering with his supple length of limb and superior graciousness of manner. I was sorry to see him. I already felt the atmosphere of the house growing more and more ungenial. Mr. Francis was a gentleman, certainly; but a gentleman so far removed from all my habits of thought and life that the contact could hardly give satisfaction to either. For all answer now to

her question he bowed to Miss Forella and laughed at her.

"Could you have two better specimens to judge from?" she went on.

"I should say, impossible!"

"Then pay a compliment to both of us, and declare which style you like best."

"Is it a question of conflicting styles?"

"Why Miss Burgoyne has heretical ideas, and she insists we in Philadelphia are all wrong. Now I want, as her friend, to prove to her that she is mistaken. You know I am of a benevolent nature. Now you are a judge;—judge!"

"Not such an arrogant judge as to decide before I hear the cause."

"Is fashion a bad thing?"

"It is a somewhat tyrannous power."

"But is it not good for people, on the whole?"

"I confess to being very glad sometimes to emancipate myself and get where its strictures are unheard of. 'Afar in the desert I love to ride,'" said Mr. Francis, stretching himself comfortably in a chaise longue.

"'With the silent bush-boy'—yes, I understand. But would you like your wife, if you had one, to emancipate herself? *That* is the question."

"Why shouldn't I?" said he lazily.

"That is for you to say; but isn't it the fact? The 'silent bush-boy' is one thing; but in the streets of Philadelphia, would you walk with me if I didn't wear a hoop?"

"No"

"I thought so!"

"But that has its reasons; and has nothing to do with the abstract question of grace or beauty. I would not walk with you, in the supposed case, because the circumstances would shew that however great your charms, you were deficient in sense and good taste."

"Precisely. So I tell Miss Burgoyne. And what is true of hoops is true of everything else, isn't it?"

Mr. Francis laughed and said something about "a broad assertion."

"O but you know what I mean. Isn't it a *duty*, to conform to custom and not make any fuss of singularity?"

"No person of good taste will make a 'fuss,' about anything, least of all with a purpose to be singular. I confess, with all that, I think a little more individuality allowed by fashion, or taken in spite of her, would be a great gain to society."

"Individuality is singularity," said Miss Forella pouting.

"So fashion has decreed," Mr. Francis answered, bowing.

"And you don't half support me. There! take mamma in to dinner, and don't talk unless you can talk better. Miss Burgoyne," she said lower, taking my arm and hanging upon me confidingly, "I have a treat for you this evening. Are you fond of pictures?"

"I have seen very few," I said. "I take great pleasure in the few I have seen."

"So I guessed you do. Well I am going to take you to see a great picture. If you'll go?"

"O I'll go," said I joyously. "What is it?"

"I'll explain it when you come to see it. I am glad you don't ask me who painted it, for I couldn't tell you that."

"Does it matter, who painted a picture, if it is good?"

"That is innocence!" said the young lady laughing. "Au contraire. Just the other way, my dear Miss Burgoyne. It is no sort of matter what a picture is, if you can only prove that it is by some famous hand."

"That would not tell me anything."

"No, and it don't tell *me* anything; but it answers all the purpose. It proves that you are a person of taste, or you would not buy a painting that must have cost so much; and it proves that you are a person of means, or you could not."

"Is the picture we are going to see to-night, by a famous hand?"

"I told you, I do not know from what hand it is. Only I can assure you, crowds go to see it every evening."

"I thought day was the best time for seeing paintings?"

"This one looks best by night."

I was pleasantly excited with this anticipation, and enjoyed the dinner-time pretty well. The din-

ner itself was extremely good; and though the talk still flowed for the most part in channels where I felt myself a stranger and could but drift along, still in the business of eating and drinking all men are pretty much equal. Not quite, though. I noticed with a kind of admiration, that had no pleasure in it, with what accuracy Mr. Francis knew *how* to eat and to drink. It seemed to me he had an understanding of the very dishes; and knew not only what parts of each were to be preferred, but also in what order or in what association to take them. Mr. Birkenstall has a little of this; Mr. Francis has more; and he relished his dinner.

I do not mean to say anything against that; I relished mine; I think a good appetite is a thing to be thankful for; but the relish should not be too manifest; it gives one a disagreeable impression of the animal element in the character being unduly developed; and all this carving and picking and tasting and combining, and making a prime business of dinner-time, I do not like. It disgusts me, to see a man taste one sort of wine after another with profound consideration, warm his claret to a certain point, and mix his punch bowl at the end of all. I have seen it at my sister's table, at a small dinner party; and this evening Mr. Francis shewed himself an adept in all the arts of the table, though no punch was called for. Still, the dinner amused me. After dinner we put on our wraps to go out. Miss Forella tried to make me

leave my bonnet and wear instead a beautiful scarf she offered to lend me. But I chose to wear my own bonnet, and had reason to be very glad I did.

We drove to the place where the picture was to be seen; Miss Forella and Mr. Francis on the way keeping up a gay sort of bantering talk, the drift of which I could not make out. It seemed to be full of hidden meanings, to which I had no clue. We stopped before what seemed to be a large building; went up stairs and along galleries, till at last a door was opened and we filed into a little bit of a place which we had, it appeared, to ourselves alone. There was room for a larger party, and we all had good seats. I was bewildered; never having seen such a house before in my life. The building seemed very large, all one vast room; and around the sides of it, tier above tier, I saw rows of such places as the one we were in; little divisions, every one with seats and people. Down below, where the floor should be, the floor was not visible; for there too were ranges of seats, one behind another, all facing one way; and all, down below and up above, looked towards one side of the building where there appeared to be an enormous high flat wall, with a very large picture in the centre of it. Gas lights were everywhere through the place, yet the light was too dim to make out things as clearly as I wished.

"Is that the picture, there?" I asked, pointing to the one described.

"Yes, of course," Miss Forella answered, looking another way.

"I cannot see it. Nobody can see it."

"We shall have more light by and by."

"Are all these people here to see that one picture? People are coming in all the while."

"Of course. We shall have a full house. No, there will be more pictures than one. I am so delighted!" Miss Forella went on with a laugh and a clap of her hands—"it is so delicious to shew things to people who have never seen them before!"

"And who never would see them, perhaps, but for your kind offices," Mr. Francis added.

"Indeed Miss Burgoyne wouldn't. Mrs. Birkenstall has no taste for this sort of thing."

"My brother-in-law is very fond of pictures," I put in.

"He would never think of bringing you to see this one. I know him."

"But there are a great many people here!" I remarked in increasing wonderment.

"O yes; you'll not be surprised when you know more about it."

I heard now an unmistakeable note of preparation down below; and looking more narrowly I perceived a space there set with chairs and music desks, and saw further that men with instruments in their hands were entering and taking their places. "Music!" I cried,—"how is that? Music too? You did not tell me."

"O yes; they always give music here while people are looking at the pictures."

"Sister arts," observed Mr. Francis.

There must be a good deal of music contemplated, for I heard a variety of instruments undergoing tuning or trying; I do not know what it was; and then all of a sudden the house was filled with a burst of light. It was a brilliant illumination, under which I could see to my renewed astonishment, that the ladies who filled the sides of the house were like so many greenhouse flowers, in such variety of colour and so beautifully dressed. Nobody wore hats, that I could see; though looking closer I discovered a few. They were all rather in the background. More and more I was getting bewildered; and I turned my attention to the picture. Now that I could see it in the bright light, it did not provoke my admiration. I thought it a coarse affair, but to be sure that might be my ignorance. I asked Miss Forella what the subject of it was? She answered, she never knew what the subject of anything was. I saw Mr. Francis biting in his lips. Of course, I reflected, I knew nothing about art, and had better put no questions about what I did not understand. I gave my attention again silently to what was before me. And my attention was diverted in spite of myself by a burst of music from the orchestra down below, who had got their instruments in order to suit them. My eyes forgot the picture, my ears were taken captive by such bewitching

sounds. Can I ever tell what that opening music was to me? I can never forget it. I was whirled away from the present and the actual, lifted out of my own life as it were, and suddenly given wings, to go whither I had never been and see what I had never seen until then. I think I sunk my face on my hands, that no images upon the retina of my eyes might trouble the impressions I was receiving through another sense. I suddenly seemed to rise into a higher conception of life, and enter for the first time its solemnities and its mysteries; yet vaguely, though with a reality which took away my breath. When the sounds ceased I lifted my head, and met Mr. Francis's eyes fixed on me.

"Rubbish!" said Miss Forella. "What did they play that old stuff for?"

"Miss Burgoyne does not think it rubbish."

"I suppose Miss Burgoyne and I take views generally different on all subjects. I never heard them play that music here before."

But what next he said, or she, I do not know. As a little before, my sight had been banished by hearing, so now the converse of that took place. I was looking that moment at the great, coarse picture; when to my utter amazement it began to disappear. The lower part first, and then it seemed to run up or roll up and in some manner get out of the way; it was there no more. What was there, where it had been, was a large room, handsomely furnished; and people were in it, who forthwith began to sing.

"The picture is gone!" said I, in great mystification. But at that, Miss Forella put her handkerchief to her face and laughed till she shook. She could scarce keep her merriment within safe bounds.

"You will see it again," Mr. Francis said gravely.

I felt some mystery here, and again found no encouragement to put more questions. Doubting and suspicious, of I do not know what, I turned to see further what was doing where those people were singing. I could not understand what they said, of course; and I could as little see what they were about; various movements were going on, that seemed to have a purpose; only the meaning was not clear to me. Presently those went out and others came in; all singing; and the singing was sometimes beautiful. The people were beautifully dressed too; at least some of them. I began to be greatly fascinated with what I saw, it was so pretty, so pretty! Then Miss Forella, having got over her fit of merriment, began to come to my help, and told me the story of the scenes that were going on in that room.

"But what are they doing?" said I. "It is not real?"

Which was too much for Miss Forella; and she went off into another fit of ecstatics, trembled with laughter, and kept her face stuffed into her handkerchief. No loud sound came from her pretty lips all this while; she was ecstatic in a quiet way. Mr. Francis took up the thread of her speech, see-

ing she was incapable, and interpreted to me the actions and the words of the players. For I had begun to divine in what sort of a place I must be; and I had not time to be vexed, I was so bewildered with enchantment. The scene changed now; and instead of a room I saw a lovely garden or pleasure ground; how it got there I could not imagine, and could not stop to speculate; and the sights that floated before my eyes were of entrancing beauty. Often too, as I said, the singing was delicious. Nevertheless, after a time I began not to like the whole thing. A vague feeling of uneasiness came over me, which was pointed and sharpened by an occasional look or tone of one or other of my companions. I did not fancy the explanations that were given me; and at the same time I perceived that my companions were softening or hiding the truth. I was not content either with what I saw or what I heard; and I began to wish myself well away.

"How do you like it?" said Miss Forella to me for the fourth or fifth time. And I had answered hitherto, "Very well"; but now I said, "I do not know."

"If poky old Iredell only knew you were here, and that I had brought you! Wouldn't he thank me? Good enough for him."

This incautious speech brought my attention well awake. It was the first thing that really startled me.

"What if he knew we were here?" said I. "What then?"

"O he knows I come," said my companion. "That's nothing new."

"Then why did you say that?"

"O because, I owe him a grudge. I hate preaching and preachers. Don't ever preach to people. It makes them run the other way, like the Irishman's pig. So when old Iredell tries to tie me up. I slip my head out of the bridle and run."

"He would be a bold man that would try to tie you up," remarked Mr. Francis; "and for ought I know Iredell has the pluck for it; but now *I* am going to be bold, and forbid you to look on the stage."

"Nonsense!" said Miss Forella, whom her mother never, it seemed to me, attempted to influence one way or another. She looked up, laughing and wilful, at Mr. Francis, but I saw that this time he was in earnest.

"If you do," said he, "I will never bring you here again. Here sit back, you and Miss Burgoyne —I beg your pardon, Miss Burgoyne, but it is necessary. Sit here—I will tell you when you may use your eyes again."

He was half laughing, though quite in earnest; even Miss Forella submitted to him; and as for me, such a horror came over me at being where I was, that I could not bear it two minutes longer. I sat trembling with uncertainty those two minutes; then muttering something, that I must get out, I rose, opened the box door and dashed out into the gallery. Along the gallery I sped; how

I made out the way I cannot tell; by some blind instinct of memory; down stairs, out of the door, and found myself panting and quivering in the street. Before I could look round, I knew that Mr. Francis was beside me. He thought I was overtaken by sudden illness, and asked if I was faint?

"No," I said.

He asked if I was ill?

"I am not going back there again," said I. "Do not mind me. Only tell me which way I must go to get home."

"Home! you cannot go home alone," he said decidedly.

"Yes. I can. I would rather. Which is the way? for I do not know where I am. Only put me in the way, and I can get home."

"Not alone, at this hour; that is impossible. The performance will be over soon. Hadn't you better just go back and sit it out quietly? Miss Forella expects you to take supper with her; she will be disappointed."

"I am not going back again," said I; "either to supper or anything else. Leave me; I will find my way." And I drew my shawl round me, and looked this way and that, to see if I could make out anything of my whereabouts. At the instant a figure passed me that I was sure I knew. With a flash of determination I took my measures. I let the figure pass and get a few yards away, and then I broke from Mr. Francis and hurried off, running,

upon the same track. He made a start to follow me, I think; but I dodged him in the ill lighted street; the figure ahead of me turned a corner, so did I turn, and my pursuer missed me. I ran, for the swift stride of my protector or guide was not otherwise to be successfully followed; it went on before me steady, straight and quick, and I had to make a few springs very much in earnest to enable me to catch up with him. Till I had done that, I had a pang of anxiety lest some fancied resemblance had misled me; but when I was close behind him I knew I was not mistaken and all was right. But then immediately I began to think how much was not "all right," as I panted along. Which way was my unconscious guide leading me? and how far and how long could I follow at this rate? and if he was allowed to remain unconscious that I was behind him, might he not suddenly go into some house and disappear and leave me indeed in darkness, literal and figurative? And if I made myself known, what ever would he think of me? And meanwhile, how he walked! I was losing breath again. This would never do. I *must* make myself known, at all risks, if I could. So I made another spring to get quite near, and spoke out, for I was growing desperate—and spoke his name.

"Mr. Iredell!"—

He did not hear, and I had to speak again and louder, and again. Then he stopped and turned. I came up breathless

"Mr. Iredell, could you—would you—be so good, as to walk a little slower?"

"Miss Burgoyne!" he said in great astonishment,—"It cannot be Miss Burgoyne? Alone? How came you here?"

"You walked so fast," I said panting; "I could hardly keep up,—and I had to speak to you."

"To speak to me?"

"Yes, for I was afraid you might get away from me."

"But where are you going?"

"I want to go home,—if I knew which way it is."

"You don't know?"

"No; I do not know at all where I am. It happened—"

"What has happened?" And then he offered his arm to me; and I felt so glad and so ashamed, both at once, that I did not know what to say.

"What has happened?" he repeated. "But, Miss Burgoyne, how came you here? You are a long way from home."

"If you can tell me which way to go," said I still panting, "I will not trouble you."

"Tell you which way to go?" said he half laughing; "what do you mean? Don't you know, little girls must not run about Philadelphia alone in the dark? And how came you to lose your way?"

We began to walk again now, slowly, and I observed my protector changed the direction of his steps, as well as moderated the pace of them.

was greatly embarrassed what to say, or where to begin; with what *could* I begin?—but I saw he waited for my answer.

"I have not known my way all the evening," I began. "Miss Forella invited me to dine with her."

"Miss Forella! Ah?"

"And when I got there, to her house, I mean, she said she was going to take me to see a picture; a great picture; and I was very glad to go, for I like to see things, and I have never seen pictures much. So after dinner we went; she, and her mother, and Mr. Francis, and I."

"To see a picture?"

"So she said. And I cannot tell you where we went, or what the name of the place is; but it was a play of some sort, Mr. Iredell."

He was silent now, listening.

"And the house must have been a theatre. I never saw one before, so at the first I did not know. And I cannot tell you the name of the play, either, for it was French; and I do not understand French by ear though I do by eye. I began not to like it, but being there I did not see how I could get away; so I made the best of circumstances; and some of the music was very beautiful—"

"Music?" said my companion.

"Music and dancing. I did not like to be there, but as I could not help myself I was amused, at first. And then—"

I paused, but he waited.

"Then, after a time, I did not like the way of things; and I saw one or two looks pass between my companions, and I grew uneasy and suspicious; and at last, I don't know what they were doing on the stage, but Mr. Francis put himself in front of us and told Miss Forella if she looked at them he would never bring her there again. I felt then, Mr. Iredell, as if I could not stay another minute. I burst out, and got down to the street; and Mr. Francis followed me, thinking I was faint; but I was not faint, only I could not bear to go back into that place again, and I would not."

Mr. Iredell did not speak for a block or two; and I wondered what he thought of me.

"Did he, did Francis, let you come off by yourself alone, to find the way home on foot?"

"Not exactly. He told me I could not do it. He tried to make me go back. Ought I to have gone back? I could not bear to do it."

"And he let you set off alone?"

"Not exactly. He would have hindered me if he could. I ran away. I would not be kept."

"But you were going quite the wrong way, and very far from home."

"Yes, because I—"

Here I stopped. What was I going to say? Such a feeling of shame came over me, as I never felt in my life before and hope never to feel again. I was silent, and Mr. Iredell was silent. This would not do. At last I plucked up courage.

"Mr. Iredell, I saw you pass—I was sure it was

you--and I thought you would tell me the way, or I could follow you rather, and I should be safe where you were. I did not want to speak to you at first; and then you walked so fast I got a terror of losing sight of you somehow; and then I made a spring and spoke your name."

"Where did you see me pass?"

"At that place—when Mr. Francis and I were standing in the street."

"You followed me from there? You must be tired out," said he gently.

"No, I am not a bit tired now," I insisted.

"You are trembling. My dear Miss Burgoyne, I might read you several lessons upon the text of this evening's work; but the first thing that comes to me is,—Do not dine with Miss Forella any more."

"O I never shall!"

"And the next thing is, Go to drive with me to-morrow afternoon."

"That is a very pleasant lesson," I said. "Your teaching, considering all things, is very indulgent, Mr. Iredell."

"There is no telling what I shall say to you to-morrow," said he pleasantly. And then the rest of the way we had a quiet nice talk, and I felt all right and quite myself when I got home. Mr. Iredell had been out of town, which was the reason why he had not come for me before.

Somehow I felt no necessity to tell my sister and her husband all my experiences. I was content and quiet, and had no mind to go over the

whole thing again, nor to encounter their criticisms. They would be shocked at my running through Philadelphia streets alone, following the steps of somebody who did not so much as know of my being there; and I could not much blame them! I was tempted to be shocked myself when I considered it. Yet I could not fancy that Mr. Iredell thought ill of me. All his words and manner forbade me to think so. Meanwhile my brother and sister rather rallied me for being silent and meditative, and so I took up my shawl and came off to bed.

Oct. 20.

MR. IREDELL was as good as his word, and the weather this time did not hinder. I had my drive that next day, and I have had several more. Caroline says it is ridiculous, for Mr. Iredell to be taking me to drive. I cannot see why; and Mr. Birkenstall, when she made the remark the other day at table, said *he* could not.

"What's the matter with Iredell?" he asked. "He's as fine a looking fellow as you'll easily find."

"Looks are nothing—" said Caroline.

"Aren't they? Well, he has money enough."

"What does he do with it?"

"I don't know. Takes care of it, I suppose. He is a safe man."

"He is close," said my sister. "He has loads,

and he does nothing with it. Keeps his mother at that place out of town; when he might give her as good a house as anybody has in Philadelphia."

"He has as good a house as anybody in Phila delphia; a beautiful old-fashioned house in Poulteney Place."

"Why does his mother live out in the country then?"

"Maybe she likes it. But he *is* a safe man. I am not afraid to have Desire go driving with him."

"I am," said Caroline. "Desire wants a differ ent sort of society."

I knew better, privately; but I asked her merrily, what sort she thought I wanted?

"Some sort that would get you rid of your absurd notions. Here is this child, Sandie, will not do a thing that the rest of the world do. She refuses to dance; of course parties are stupid. She declines to go to the theatre; she does not wish to learn to play cards; she won't touch wine. Now if you live in the world, you *must* do in some measure like the world."

"You forget, sister, I do not live in the world," I remarked. "I live out of it, in an old house in a country village, on the outskirts of civilization. I am only taking a glimpse at your world. I have nothing otherwise to do with it."

"Do you expect to pass your whole life in that old house at the limits of civilization?" my sister demanded.

"I have no prospect of passing it anywhere else."

"And no desire either? Is that what you mean?"

I grew a little grave. Ah, I had taken indeed a glimpse of life wider and richer by far than dwellers in Chesterfield knew. If that life were within the compass of hope, would not hope spring to it! However, I knew it was not; and hope smoothed down her plumage again, and I answered quietly.

"Yes, I would like something better than that; but not your world of dancing and theatre-going. That does not attract me at all."

"What is your idea, Desire?" Mr. Birkenstall said with an amused sort of curiosity and interest in his face. I think, I am a kind of problem to him. "What is your notion of a life that you would like? It seems we have not been able to hit your fancy. What is your fancy?"

"You have been very kind, Brother Sandie; you and Caroline. I have been very happy here; very, very! You have no need to say that."

"But we have not hit your ideal. Come, Desire, tell me. What is it that you would like, if you could get it?"

"Speaking merely for pleasure," said I, "just the *pleasure* of existence—I could easily tell. I would like what would made me grow mentally, and what would satisfy my growing capacities as they grew. I would like to know books, and pictures, and men, and the world we live in; what human activity has done, and what it is doing, in science and art and practical industries. I would like to understand what all these advances have accomplished and

what they will accomplish; if I could, I should like to see with my own eyes the foot-tracks of time and history over some parts of the earth. But for that I must travel."

Mr. Birkenstall looked at me attentively.

"So *that* is what you would like!" said he. "I believe she knows better than you do, Caroline, what would suit her. So it strikes me. And knowing that you would like all this, Desire, you are content to go back and bury yourself in a New England village on the limits of civilization?"

"I was speaking, you know, merely of the *pleasure* of life; what I would like if only pleasure was in question."

"What else is in question?"

"Oh—life is not pleasure, you know," I answered evasively.

"Shouldn't we make it pleasure, if we can?"

"As much as we can, I suppose. But really, life is to do one's work."

"What work?"

"I don't know," said I smiling. "Mine is to take care of grandmother. Yours I suppose is something else. Every one has his own."

"To take care of your grandmother. And that for a young woman whose aspirations cover all science and all knowledge, not to speak of art and antiquity. Heavens and earth! You leave pleasure quite out of the account, then?"

"Not entirely, Brother Sandie. There is pleasure in doing one's work; isn't there?"

"Satisfaction, perhaps. Hardly pleasure, in your line of work, I should say."

"It is different," I allowed. "But the main thing is to do one's work."

"Better than to go driving with Mr. Iredell?"

"That is very good!" said I laughing. "His horse is good, and he knows how to drive; and the roads are capital, and the country is most beautiful, and the weather is delightful."

"And he realizes Dr. Johnson's idea of the summit of human enjoyment; to drive fast, along a good road, with a pretty woman beside him!"

"I am sorry for Dr. Johnson then, if he knew no better," said I. "Mr. Iredell does, I am sure."

"Well, don't like him too much," said Sandie. "Don't like him any better than you do me."

But I could not answer that, because I *do*, and must. I like Sandie very much; nevertheless there is simply no comparison between the two men. There is a kind of innate nobleness that appears in everything Mr. Iredell says or does, or looks. It is in the very set of his head and shoulders, and in the repose of his grave face; and in his walk; and in all his manner to women. And next day, when he had again taken me off upon a drive, I almost went back upon my words about Dr. Johnson. For taking my side of the pleasure, I confess I could not imagine anything much better than what I was enjoying.

Pleasure quickens one's senses, I think. Or is it that I am really enlarging, not only my world

but my power of perceiving what is in the world? I almost think both must be true; for I never had so keen a taste for things as I have now; and to be sure, I never had half so many things to taste. But I have seen autumn days before, and I have delighted in them; yet never in my life as I delighted that afternoon. I think it must have been one of the golden days of my life; and if there is *much* such coin in store for me I shall be a very rich woman.

The weather was absolutely perfect, in the first place. There was one of those golden atmospheres that come in happy Septembers and Octobers; very warm, very still, with a glow and a fulness of colouring everywhere, such as we have only in autumn of all the year. I am using an expression I could not have used a few months ago; I have heard it lately in talk about pictures. It was a glory; as if nature were setting a crown upon the head of the year after the year's finished work. I said so.

"Why say 'nature'?" Mr. Iredell asked. "Why not say at once, it is as if God were setting a crown upon the head of the year?"

"But the year is his own work."

"Why should he not set a crown upon his own work? 'Thou crownest the year with thy goodness'—"

"He *can*, of course; but why should he?"

"To give us a token of what he will do in another sphere, perhaps. 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' 'Ye

shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.' And what is 'his own work,' if we are not?"

"O do you think things are tied together so?" I asked.

"What things?"

"Things in nature and things in the Bible?"

"Things on earth and things in heaven. Yes, I believe they are very closely and intimately 'tied' together; the nearer and sensual being a lovely image and teaching of the more distant and spiritual."

"Thinking so, how much more the world, I mean the earth, must be to you than it is to most people!"

"Do you not think I am the gainer?"

"O very much! But I wish I could learn your art."

"It is not difficult. Study the Bible and study out its allusions. Then study nature and try to interpret its teachings. Finally, try to find God in everything."

"But—I should think one might make mistakes."

"Yes, easily, if one follows one's fancy, or *anything* but the pure teaching of the Bible itself. Hold fast to that, and be humble, and have nothing to do with speculation. That is my advice. Now, do you know where we are going?"

"How should I? Every time you take me to something new. But this is most beautiful!"

We were going indeed through a wonderful show of beauty. The road ran along by the side of the river, and through a country that was beginning to put on fall colours. The tints of gold and brown and purple and olive were not mingled yet into one uniform glow, but delighted the eye individually; and here and there a maple branch flamed out in orange and red. The sunshine, as I said, gave a golden medium through which to see all this; and we drove along in the midst of a world which I hardly recognized for the same I moved in every day. Meanwhile Mr. Iredell told me of a visit he once made to a high-lying dairy farm in the Bavarian mountains. I say "farm," though it was not that properly; only some summer-green meadows up in the hills, from which the frost early drives the cattle and the people. Nevertheless these high-lying meadows are beautiful while the warm weather lasts; and the life led up there is wild and free. He described to me the mountain heads closing the grassy pastures in; the firs growing on the steep slopes; the flowers among the rocks; the luxuriant herbage; the primitive food and the primitive people. I seemed to see it and feel it all as he spoke. It was like a fairy story, and all the while we were travelling through a fairy world.

"Mr. Iredell," I said at last, "don't you miss it?'

"I beg your pardon,—miss what?"

"Travelling, and all you used to find in travelling?"

"No," said he quietly. "I have found something better."

I would have liked to know what his thought was, and did not like to press the question.

"You do not ask me what I mean," he went on presently, "but it is fair to tell you. I have got hold of the *work* of life, Miss Burgoyne. At the time I was referring to, I did not yet know it."

"What *is* the work of life?" I said. "I wish you would tell me. That is something I occasionally puzzle about."

"No need," said he. "The work of life is simply —to do the will of God."

"But that is the very thing. How is one always to know what is the will of God?"

"Be quite willing to know it. That is the first thing; and the most difficult.

"Is *that* the most difficult?" I echoed. "But is not every Christian willing to know it?"

"No."

"How is that? and how can his being willing or not willing hinder his knowing it?"

"Hardly anything else hinders. When people are bent upon going one way, don't you see, they do not like to discern a hand that points out to them another way. Or to put it differently; when passion makes a din in our ears, we cannot hear or distinguish the soft low whisper of the Spirit. Fénélon says well, "O how rare it is, to find a soul *still enough to hear God speak!*"

I was silent a good while after this, pondering;

and Mr. Iredell was silent; and we bowled along over the smooth roads, thoughts busy and tongues hushed.

"Do you know where I am taking you?" he began again.

"No, of course; how should I?"

"Really I ought to ask your permission first; so I will only say I am taking you *towards* my own home. Will you let me introduce you there and shew you my mother?"

I felt the colour flush into my cheeks with surprise and pleasure. My astonished eyes met his, and I stammered, I do not know what, that was an expression of my feeling, or meant to be, though I think it was somewhat incoherent. After that the horse seemed to know it was all right, for he stepped out with a good will, and we sped along swiftly. I had never yet been so far from the city. We still kept in the near neighbourhood of the river, getting charming glimpses of it from time to time, passing farm lands and gentlemen's country seats, open and wood land. At last we turned in at a gate, and drove through a dressed woodland of oaks and beeches and birches, with here and there larches and mountain ash and the red of a maple branch. The drive through this woodland was beautifully kept, and the trees themselves looked fine and thrifty, many of them old. There was an indefinable charm upon all I saw, from the time we entered these grounds. I have tried since to think in what it consisted, and I can hardly tell.

There was a perfection of order and thrift, everywhere visible, from the biggest tree to the smallest shrub; yet not prim order, only perfect condition. Then there was a constant surprise of lovely things; here a magnificent hemlock, there the clusters of the mountain ash; then we drove through a wilderness of colour, where the brilliance of geraniums and salvias and coleus was set off by the greys of cinerarias and centaureas and the purple of Achyranthus. I felt like jumping out of the carriage to wander among them and enjoy them more thoroughly; but Mr. Iredell drove fast and I could not ask him to stop. He told me the names of the plants, however, which else I should not have known; though I have seen some of them in a place near Chesterfield. We left that blaze of beauty behind us and went through a grove of firs and larches for a little distance; it must have been quite a space though, for as I said we drove fast; and then suddenly we came out of the wood upon a sunny open ground, where stood the house. Here there was no blaze of colour, but a soft green lawn opened to the river bank, sloping gently down; and with its back against the dark firs the house stood, looking over the lawn, over the river, and across to woods and fields on the opposite shore. The house itself was of some dark stone, low and extended, with a low doorway. No flowers were here to be seen, except some hardy climbing roses on the wall, still in blossom, and Virginia creeper growing purple, and Irish ivy in its full and

changeless deep and glossy green. The lawn and house were framed in by trees; the aspect such that the sunshine seemed to be caught and detained there. I was so delighted that I could not say a word. Mr. Iredell took me out of the carriage, a servant led it away, and we went in.

Every step increased my bewilderment of delight. We entered, not a hall; the rest of the houses I have seen in my life had all a hall or entry running through them, except some poorer sort of country houses which had not even that. We entered here a room, I should have called it, yet it was flagged with stone, and thick carpets laid down in some places. All had a quaint old-time look; the woodwork and wainscoting was very plain, unpainted and dark with age; there were some pictures on the walls, in another part of them some weapons, artistically disposed to make a good appearance; and an immense china jar was filled with gay leaves and flowers. No one was here, and Mr. Iredell led me through without pausing, opened a door at one side, and brought me into the presence of a lady sitting there. I don't know whether to describe the room or the lady first. I saw nothing but the lady, for that minute; and yet I seemed to know at the same instant what the surroundings were which set her off. It was the loveliest old lady I ever saw or dreamed of. Old, yet not very old certainly; her hair was not much grey, and folded back under a plain widow's cap; and face and

figure were alike prepossessing. She rose to receive me, and I do not know whether her manner was most kind or dignified; there was a stately grace about it, that I never saw the like; and it was at the same time exceedingly kind. She looked at me with tender eyes and a smile of welcome, and made me sit down by her. I was so wholly engrossed and taken up with her, that I could not give my attention to lesser things; yet I knew, or rather I know now, what sort of a place the room was. A corner room, I think, looking out in front upon the lawn and the river; for I know the glint of the sunshine came from the water, and the golden glow of the light was reflected upon the turf. Then at the further side of the room, opposite the door by which we had entered, through glass windows or doors, I saw the splendour of flowers; a conservatory gay and magnificent with its exotic blooms. The room itself was low, and matted, with warm rugs, and old-fashioned easy chairs, and tables with rich-coloured hangings, and books, and work; and a beautiful plate glass screen before the fire. For there was a fire of logs blazing in the deep chimney place.

I was made to sit down in one of the easy chairs, beside Mrs. Iredell; and they asked me also to take off my hat and gloves; and whatever they asked me, I did it. I felt myself in an enchanted dream; nothing would I do to disturb the enchantment; the dream should last as long as it might.

"You have had a long drive," my kind entertainer said. Her voice was sweet, and her manner, as I said, indescribably gracious.

"It did not seem long," I said.

"You are very kind, to let my son bring you to see me."

"It is not *my* kindness," I said smiling. "The kindness is all to me. You are very good, I think, ma'am, to let me come."

"Old people, in these days, do not expect young people to care to visit them," she went on.

"They do in Chesterfield," said I. "Is it different in Philadelphia?"

"Chesterfield,—that is your home?"

I said yes.

"It must be a happy place, if it bears in mind the Lord's command, 'Thou shalt honour the face of the old man.'"

"They do that, I think. But I do not know that it is a specially happy place."

"Why not?"

"I do not know. I used to think it was pretty fair, as places go. Now, since I have been staying in Philadelphia, it seems to me the life there is very narrow."

"Narrow,—how do you mean?" said Mrs. Iredell; but not inquisitorially; only with a sort of kind, genial interest to which my heart opened. Mr. Iredell was sitting by, but he said nothing.

"I mean, mentally narrow; moving within small limits. Since I came here, it seems to me as if my

thoughts had got wings, and had flown up over some high mountain barrier that shut me in,—not in the Happy Valley of Rasselas," I added laughing. "And now I seem to have got a look over the mountains, and I begin to see what a wide place the world is, and what things are in it; things of which Chesterfield has no knowledge or notion."

"That must have been a pleasant experience," said Mrs. Iredell smiling; "to get a look over those mountains."

"Yes—" said I,—"very; if I did not look forward to living behind them—to living in Chesterfield, the rest of my life."

"What has wrought this enlargement of your vision? what about Philadelphia has had such a happy effect? Can you trace it to anything in particular?"

"Yes—" said I, hesitating. And now I did not exactly want to speak out my thought; but after all, it seemed the best and simplest thing to do. So I went on. "It came from hearing Mr. Iredell's talk, more than anything else."

"Max," said the old lady smiling, "you have a good deal to answer for."

"O I am very glad of it," I hastened to say; "very glad. Even if I do spend all my life in Chesterfield, I am glad to have had a glimpse of what there is in the world beside. To have seen this place, for instance, will always be a great treasure in my memory."

"It pleases you?"

"There is nothing like it in Chesterfield!" I said with a shake of my head.

"But I suppose," said the old lady kindly, "that Chesterfield has its own beauties?"

"O yes, indeed it has, or I suppose I should not be able to relish these so much." I stopped, for I feared I was talking too much. But Mrs. Iredell asked me to tell her what were some of the beauties of Chesterfield? So I spoke of the grand old chestnut trees in the meadow back of the house, which are a delight to me summer and winter; and I tried to describe the girdle of hills shutting us in, half wooded and half in clearing, with their cultivated fields and the changing colours of the different crops. "Still," I added, "they do shut us in."

"And you feel like Rasselas," remarked Mr. Iredell.

"I don't know how I shall feel when I get back."

"How was it before you came?" he asked smiling.

"I thought nothing of Rasselas. I think I was like a young animal that has not opened its eyes."

"Then my dear," said Mrs. Iredell, "you will have, perhaps, one thing to guard against when you go back."

"What is that, ma'am?"

"You must guard against thinking that what God gives us, in any kind, is not the best for us."

"Yes," I said. "I know. I dare say I shall have to guard against that."

"And one of the best helps," Mrs. Iredell went

on with her gracious smile at me, "is, to be firmly assured that what he gives *is* the best."

"That might be difficult. How could it be possible, in some cases?"

"It could be possible only to one who believes in his word, 'No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' In that case, it must be true that what he withholds would not, for us, and just then, be good."

"Or that we are not walking uprightly," said I. But here Mr. Iredell broke in, and proposed that I should take a walk to see the grounds. That was just what I wanted. We went out and roamed about for a long while, in the wood, by the river, and through the garden; where the beauties of colour and growth were not more lovely than strange to my eyes. All the while talk was going on; for most of the things I was looking at needed explanation or gave pleasant room for it. The sun was almost down as we returned to the house; and I thought to myself, this wonderful visit was about over; but I was mistaken. The best was to come.

"Now my mother will give you some tea," Mr. Iredell said.

"Tea!" I exclaimed.

"Certainly; after twelve miles of driving and two or three of walking, and with twelve miles of driving still before you."

"The moon is up," said I joyously.

"And if she were not, you need not be afraid."

So we went in. By this time it had grown a

little cool; and there was the fire blazing up, casting its red shine over the room and the stately old lady sitting in the glow of it; and the table was spread; and a tea-kettle was singing in front of the fire. It was the prettiest in-door picture I ever saw. The light shone on the glass doors of the conservatory and just revealed the plants within; and on the table the silver and glass was all in a sparkle. No servant was present. Mr. Iredell lifted the tea-kettle, and his mother made the tea; and we sat round the table to drink the tea and to eat fresh honey and fruit and the most delicious bread and butter. Every thing on that table was a study. Old silver, old glass, old china; one could see that these things had a history. Caroline's things are handsome, but they are new. And my host and hostess were so kind, they made me feel at ease and at home; though it was such a strange thing, my taking tea there.

The drive home was rather quiet. Mr. Iredell did not talk much, and I was in a dream of content.

Oct. 25.

MY visit here is over. Caroline is going to Washington, she says; and consequently, at least *she* makes it consequently, I must go back to Chesterfield. This was all told and discussed last night. This morning I found my morning hour a

very sober one. The sunshine was glittering just as bright as ever upon the brick walls and chimneys; down in the garden the chrysanthemums are still resplendent in nearly all the colours of the rainbow; and I am going away! That quite changes all. The sunlight looks unsympathetic; and the artemisias are heartless little things, careless how all the world goes, so they be right. I set about my packing, saying to myself over and over —"No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"—and yet I cannot prevent the tears from coming and dropping into my trunk. I must be very weak, I think; and I do not want to be that.

Oct. 28, *Chesterfield.*

I CAME away a day after my last writing. Sandie went with me to the station, and parted from me just where he met me near two months ago. Not two months; and they look to me more like two years. I think I have changed, in some ways, as much as ever I did in two years of my life before. I seem to myself just like a kitten that has opened its eyes and sees the world for the first time; the difference is, that in my case the world does not look exactly like a thing to play with. Have I done all my play, I wonder, in these two short, long months? I am ashamed to write it, but the truth is that my journey homewards was rather sombre.

I got home about four o'clock in the afternoon, and walked up from the station. I had a mind to rouse and stir myself mentally by the exercise. The hills were all gorgeous in reds and purples and orange browns and gold tints, looking as beautiful as I ever saw them. Chesterfield was in its splendour to welcome me. The October air was clear and calm, with peaceful little flecks of cloud lying along on the blue; but what a difference it makes, whether your own spirits are in tune or out of tune! Mine were out of tune; the colours jarred, the cloud flecks worried me. Yet I believe I did hear their soft low speech and felt the meaning of it; for I began to take myself up. What sort of acknowledgment was I making for all this wealth of beauty spread out before me; intended for my pleasure? Here were tears actually gathering and falling on my bonnet strings. That would not do for Olive to see; so I stopped to wipe them off; and then I gave way entirely. I sat down on a bank, there was nobody in sight, and had it out; in a good hearty fit of tears. I do not quite know what they were for, either; but I felt miserably depressed, and tears were the best remedy. Then I scolded myself.

Could I not trust God better than that?—Yes, but trust him for what? here was I come home, and Chesterfield all round me.—Then, child, if he has brought you here, here it is that he wants you; do you not choose what he chooses?—Yes, I said, I do. I do, and I will. I do not even wish

to be anywhere but where my dear Lord appoints me my place; and the work he has for me to do, that I will do, and no other; and step by step I shall find out what it is.—Then why do you cry?

I do not know why, but my tears poured in a stream. I chided myself for discontent. Had pleasure spoiled me for duty? I had never been discontented with Chesterfield before. Now it seemed indeed like the Happy Valley of Rasselas with the happiness left out. However, this would not do to go on. I crowded back my tears and looked up. On the tops and western slopes of the hills the sunshine lay, winning bright; promising peace and righteousness and goodness. I knew it did, and my heart took the promise. Only, to be sure, it must be in God's way, not in mine. His way for me just now was a plain path of duty; and I collected myself to look at it before taking up my work. I knew it all. There would be my grandmother to wait upon. Olive and I take turns in dressing her and getting her up for the day; and then all day long we attend upon her, for she wants frequent services, and one of us must be at hand. Then there was the housework, which also Olive and I share between us; our one servant of help being quite unequal to the whole and incompetent for much of it. One of us always cooks the meals, and the other sets tables and puts the rooms in order. When all that is done, there is only left our sewing and knitting, visiting our neighbours, and attending the Dorcas meetings.

Well, I looked at it all, as a horse might eye his collar after he had been out of draught for a while; and then, methought, I put my head in and began to pull as I had been used to do. It was not a heavy burden; certainly not. I had only got a little delicate and spoiled, and my neck did not like the collar. I resolved they at home should not find this out; and I resolved further my dear Master should not find me a lagging or unwilling servant; and so at last I began to walk onward again, and with better spirit. How lovely the shadows were, creeping up the valley sides! How clear and strong the air of our mountains! I drank great draughts of it as I went along, and my thoughts went over and over Mr. Iredell's words, that "Life is, to do the will of God."

Our house stands where a rift in the hills lets in the latest sunlight from the western sky. It was pouring now red over all the windows, and catching the tops of the chestnut trees behind on the hillside. But not a living thing was to be seen, near or far; it was a solitary picture. As I drew near the house, I perceived the odours of ham frying, and when I opened the door of the kitchen the blue smoke met me. So did the noise of the sputtering cookery, and Olive came through the smoke to greet me, fork in hand.

"Well, you have staid away long enough!" she said kissing me. "I am glad to see you back. Just get off your things and make the table ready, and we'll talk afterwards."

"Where's Amanda?"

"Gone home."

"Home! What's the matter?"

"Scalded her hand. Come, hurry, Desire! we can talk afterward. I shall be ready in a few minutes."

It gave me a little bit of a check, to find that *everything* was on our hands; but I went in and kissed grandmother, ran up to my room and threw off bonnet and cloak, and for one minute kneeled down. I had thanksgiving to make, and also I knew I needed help quick and strong, to enable me to do right well what I had to do. Then I went down and set the table. The old brown cupboard and the yellow floor looked strange to my eyes; the paper curtains at the windows displeased me; the tablecloth was coarse, however it was as white as Caroline's damask or anybody's; the knives, I fear, were not susceptible of as good a polish. I could not help making comparisons as I went on with my work. And I *could* not help feeling a little dismally the separation from the beautiful and the refined and the fitting in all these matters. They do not affect personal worth, of course; but do they not have something to do with personal charm? What I could do, quick as lightning I resolved I would do.

"I shall make you a rug, one of these days, to keep your feet off the bare floor," I said to grandma as I went back and forth with the plates and cups.

"*What?*" said grandma. And I repeated it.

"Make a rug! How'll you make it?"

"Knit it."

"You had better knit yourself some stockings. Where should my feet be, but on the floor?"

"The floor is cold."

"My feet ain't. And Olive'll lay down the carpet shortly."

That old rag carpet! I knew it, and I knew that it must go down when cold weather came; but I had forgotten it, and was sorry to remember.

"Will you have your chair moved up now grandma?"

"No. You may set the little stand here, by me. My hands are not warm, if my feet be. I'm glad you're home to help Olive. Olive's had it all to do, for a good spell."

So I set the stand for her, and arranged her supper upon it, as soon as Olive brought it in; made up the fire; and finally sat down to my own supper, keeping up my desire for it by sheer force of will.

"Well," said Olive, "has it paid?"

"What?"

"Going to Philadelphia."

"I think it has paid," I said slowly.

"You don't seem very enthusiastic about it. What have you got for your bargain?"

"Hain't you never a pickle for me?" said grandma just here. "I see you puttin' away lots o' cucumbers and things the other day."

Olive jumped up and brought her what she desired.

"Pickles for supper," said I softly. "I have got out of the way of seeing that."

"It strikes me, you have got out of the way generally," Olive responded in the same tone, and with a sharp glance. "The world has stood still *here*, while you've been gone; and you may as well open your eyes to that fact. We are just where we were."

That was not the case with me, I knew; and to hide it I rushed into talk. Olive was curious about every article and detail of my Philadelphia life; and over the discussion of it we forgot all the present details of eating supper and clearing it away. Some things I did not tell her. All that escapade of Miss Forella and the play, for instance; and my drive and afternoon at the Mansion, as Mr. Iredell's place is called. I think, some things in one's experience are too good to be laid open to ears or hearts that could not appreciate or would not sympathize with them; and I could never tell Olive, or anybody, what that afternoon was, and how Mr. Iredell and his mother seem to me. We talked, till we had put up the dishes and sat down before the fire together; and we talked on till it was time to go to bed; grandma sitting up to listen.

"It was a foolish business anyhow!" she concluded, when fatigue overcame her and she rose to go. "Desire would have been a deal better at

home and doin' her work. I allays said it was a foolish business. She's got her head upset."

"Well, it will be my turn next time"—was Olive's conclusion, finally.

There was no denying that; it was a perfectly reasonable conclusion; how could it give me annoyance? Yet it did; the words rankled; and as I went up stairs to bed fancy took up details. I imagined Olive going where I had been; not everywhere, for Miss Forella would never play tricks on *her;* but seeing and doing and enjoying in general and in particular what had lately been mine; and I was surprised at myself that it hurt me. I ought to be glad that she should have it; and I was not glad. Was I turning selfish, as a consequence of so much pleasure? I was humbled and mortified at myself. and could not understand it.

Oct. 28.

I CAME down in the morning feeling much fresher, and also more reasonable. I suppose I was tired the night I came; and tired people are not always rational. The next morning, it was Saturday, I felt in harmony with the glad sunlight. It was beautiful on the hills, bringing out the colours of red oaks and yellow hickories, and here and there a purple ash, and here and there a tall cone of dark green, where a hemlock stood soberly in the midst of its gay companions. Such a glory, such a bril-

liance upon all the world, that it seemed impossible not to feel gay and strong too. Besides, is it not all a promise and image of what the Lord will do in us and for us? If he loves strength and beauty, and this world around me says he does, then he will put both upon his children. Weak and poor as I am now, I ran down stairs feeling sure of it, and echoing the words of the psalm—

"Mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars,—Let them praise the name of the Lord."

So they do, thought I; and so will I also.

Grandma was up and in her chair by the corner of the fireplace. Olive was cooking the breakfast, and the room accordingly full again of blue smoke.

"But this is fearful, Olive!" said I. "Why don't you do this in the kitchen?"

"If you would like to make two fires and keep them up," said Olive, "I have no objection. One is enough for me."

"Do you have ham at every meal? you had it last night."

"Allays one thing," said grandmother. "We have allays one thing. Morning and noon and night, it makes no difference. I'm sort o' thirsty for a piece o' mutton."

"You mean you are thirsty for a cup of tea, grandma; and you shall have it, just so soon as I can make it."

"She always is hungry for something she hasn't got," Olive murmured.

"I don't mean tea; I mean mutton," grandmother

repeated. "I know what I say. I'm just hungry and thirsty for a piece."

"You shall have some, grandma, if I can find a bit for you to-day."

And then we sat down to breakfast, and they began to question me again. They questioned me about every imaginable thing and detail of my stay in Philadelphia. Olive began with a remark on my word about the ham, and demanded to know what Caroline had for breakfast? From that they went on, and where the one left off the other took it up. One of my hearers listened grimly, the other critically. But I was glad when breakfast was over and my catechism interrupted.

"I guess it ain't as good a place now as Chesterfield,"—was grandma's closing remark.

As soon as I could finish what I found to do, in the work of the house, I set out upon my walk to fulfil my promise about the mutton. Grandma's comparison, which had made me smile, recurred to me as I stepped from the door into the beautiful outside world. Philadelphia does not lie in such a valley, certainly; no such fair hills close it in. But then, it is not "closed in," at all; there is the charm of it, not natural but social. I had to fight myself again. Wild, sweet, beautiful nature was all around me; but the people!—and the life! there came the other contrast. No such place here as Mr. Iredell's "Mansion"; no, nor imagined in the liveliest imagination of the most fanciful inhabitant. Nobody here, nor within many a mile of

here, is there that can tell such things as he tells or talk at all as he can talk. Some of our people have a good deal of sense too; but dear me! even Mr. Francis in the comparison is like the polished agates of Caroline's bracelet over against the pebbles in the bed of one of our brooks. Maybe the pebbles are as good stone, but nobody wants to make a bracelet of them. I went on, down the valley, thinking my thoughts, and then pulled myself up again. "Life is to do the will of God." What if he wills that I should serve him here, in secret, among these hills and these people? What is that to me, if it is *his* will? What else do I want, but to do that? I stopped and stood still, and my eye followed the wild outline of the hills as it ran along upon the sky, clear cut and sharp and glittering with colour, lovely exceedingly. But also, there were long stretches of hillside where I could see no human habitation; and rocks here and there stood forth bare and stern and grim and desolate-looking. Men could not clear and cultivate those steep slopes, where the hemlocks rose in bright dark green spots amidst the gayer colouring. Nothing could make this ever anything but a wild country district; nothing would bring the world here, the world of society and art and science and travel and literature. Nothing would ever bring it. Chesterfield would be Chesterfield, to the end of time. Or if not to the end of time, for that might be too much to aver, to the end of *my* time. And I discerned in myself a panting

thirst for that other world. What should I do? I went on my way presently, turned an angle of the road, and saw the village lying before me; so much of a village as we have. The houses stand scatteringly along the valley, with wide spaces between; on one side, midway, the little white church. Near me, at the front gate of the first house in the village, Deacon Parsons was standing with a straw in his mouth. He nodded kindly.

"Hum, eh, Desire? didn't know as you'd got hum yet. When did ye come?"

"Last night, deacon. How is Mrs. Parsons?"

"Well, middlin'. She hain't had none o' her spells this week. Won't ye come in?"

"Not to-day, thank you. I am out to get some fresh meat for grandma. Who has killed a sheep, do you know?"

"Well, I don't. We hain't killed one this two months. Ma's reared a good stock o' chickens this season, and we've ben a killin' of 'em off; so we hain't wanted no mutton; and we had a leg o' Squire Joyce's, besides. Ye'd better come in and rest a spell, Desire."

But I declined and went on. Passing Squire Joyce's, as probably unsatisfactory, I turned in at the next little gate and went up to the house. Here lived the blacksmith of the village; one of the handsomest men in the place, and one of our most literary men too; unluckily his wife shares neither quality. Mrs. Chandler was however very glad to see me and questioned me without end.

could hardly get in my question; but learned at last that Farmer Binnacle had probably killed a sheep, as she knew he had asked her several days ago if she would take a quarter. Farmer Binnacle's house was at the extreme end of the settlement and beyond it. I had a pretty good walk by the time I got there. Of course I must go in. The afternoon was half gone by this time. I found the farmer and his wife at their early supper. They welcomed me uproariously, and nothing would do but I must take off my bonnet and sit up to the table, and join them in demolishing a capital pot-pie. I could not help it, so I made the best of things.

"Have you seen anything better than *that* in Philadelphy?" the farmer asked in a triumphant tone as he pushed back his plate.

"Don't ask difficult questions, father," said Mrs. Binnacle.

"I ain't askin' no difficult question," retorted her husband. "If she has seen anything better than that, in Philadelphy, I'll move house!"

"It is capital," I assented.

"Well, what did you see in Philadelphy?" said the farmer, putting his hands on his knees and looking at me; now he had satisfied his appetite he was at leisure to satisfy his curiosity. "What's there, we ain't got here?"

"People—" I suggested.

"People? There's folks enough along our hills and valleys, I judge. Folks enough to make mischief; and what more do you want?"

"We want the people to undo the mischief."

"That sort o' folks don't live. What's done is done, and no power on earth can undo it; don't you know that, Desire Burgoyne? But go on, and tell us what else you've seen, that's worth tellin'."

"It's a great thing to see a big city, Mr. Binnacle."

"Is it?"

"I think so."

"I never did see ne'er a one. Maybe my education's missed it. What the better are you, for instance, now, for having seen it?"

"I don't know that I am any better—"

"I thought so! I don't believe you be, either."

"But I feel as if I knew a good deal more."

"So did Eve after she eat the fruit. *That* don't prove nothing."

"Father," said Mrs. Binnacle laughing, "that is not a case in point. Eve's fruit was forbidden. Don't you think it's right to see what folks have made of the world?"

"I can see that in books," said the farmer. "And it was Cain's children that built cities first. I don't believe there's no good in them, for my part."

"O Mr. Binnacle!" said I. And, "O father!" cried his wife.—"Where would the nice things come from, if there warn't cities?"

"What nice things?"

"Sugar and tea and coffee; you wouldn't like to go without your coffee, father; and writing pa-

per; and books. Where would you get books? And where would I get spice, and needles?"

"From the store at the cross-roads," said the farmer.

"Ay, but where would the store get it from? You know as well as I do, and better, that if there were not cities there would not be commerce. There would not be enough concentration, enough power of interest—"

"I don't know that," said Mr. Binnacle, "and you don't; and what's more, I don't believe it. Cities are centres of wickedness; and the world could get along without that sort of concentration, I guess. I know, that's what folks say; but nothing will ever make me believe the Lord has any need of the devil's plans to carry out his own. Hey, Desire?"

"I do not know much of the wickedness of cities;—a little," I said, remembering the evening at the play. "Mr. Binnacle, who has killed a sheep lately?"

"That's what I call a change of base! Well, *I* hain't, and my wife thinks it's time. Well, I don't know, Desire; but you can try Deacon Saddler's. I've half an idee *he* has; but I ain't certain. Anyhow you can try."

So I got off. Deacon Saddler's was on my way home, and good for me; for the sun was nearing the western line of hills. I found Mrs. Saddler alone. She is one of the uncomfortable people, we all know; I dare say she has reason, poor woman.

At any rate, her house and surroundings are sure to have a look as if something was not right with the owner. So it was now. Late as the time had grown, Mrs. Saddler was only at that minute sweeping up the crumbs left from her dinner, while her eldest girl was setting the table for supper. But she was glad to see me.

"You are behind time," said I. "Mrs. Binnacle has done supper, and cleared up, before now."

"She can have supper in the middle of the forenoon, if she likes," said Mrs. Saddler to my unlucky remark. "She's got nobody but herself and her husband; I guess, if she had my seven she'd sing another tune. When a woman has six children, there's never a day that there ain't one on 'em in trouble. There's my Tom now to-day got into the wet meadow, and came home with not a dry thread on him. I give him a good spankin', to keep him from catchin' cold; but there ain't much comfort in that; and now I've got his clothes to wash, and my tubs just put away."

"But it's *Saturday*, dear Mrs. Saddler!"

"Don't I know it? and hain't I all the week's stockin's to mend? Sunday'll find me at it this time, and it ain't the first. You see, Desire, Monday it rained,—just my luck! and Tuesday I had my apple butter to make, and the deacon he wouldn't be peaceful and let me put it off; and Wednesday I began to wash, and to be sure company came; and I left everything in the suds and attended to them; made cake and pies and that; and then

Thursday there warn't no gettin' at it till it was too late; and so— Well, you've ben on a spree, hain't you? All the way to Philadelphy too! Some folks *kin* play, I'm glad to know."

"Dear Mrs. Saddler, it's the first visit I ever made in my life."

"I've made nary one. But there's lots and lots in life; and the playground seems left out o' mine."

I did not know what to say. I was not ready. Perhaps it was as well to say nothing.

"I should like to know, just for once, how it feels, to drop work for awhile," she went on. "Do tell what you've been a doin'. Maybe it 'ud rest me to hear."

"I've seen three big cities, and I have travelled over a good many hundred miles of railway."

"And what did you do when you were *there?*"

"I saw a good many people. Caroline and her friends."

"Different sort o' folks from our'n, I guess; ain't they?"

"How, different?"

"Massy, that's what I want you to tell me. I want a little o' the fun. Here am I, tuckered out, 'most, with delvin' and delvin'; and I want you to freshen me up a bit with your news. Dear me! seems to me I live in a tub. I'd like to hear what some other folks lives in."

"I shall have to come another time, dear Mrs. Saddler, to do that. See where the light is going; and I must get home. I came to get a bit of fresh

meat for granny, if I could. Who has killed a sheep lately?"

"Well we did; and I've got just what you want; and I'm right glad on't. It has done me good just to see your sweet face, and hear you say 'dear Mrs. Saddler.' There ain't many livin' as does it."

"As many as there ever were, are there not?" I asked brightly.

"Well," said she half laughing, "to be sure, the folks I cared most for called me somethin' else. I allays was like a half ripe apple; and the world has used up the good side of me. Here's your meat; and come again soon!"

So I got away, and walked fast to reach home. The exercise did me good; and the wonderful colours on the hills, they did me good too. By degrees my heart crept back to its resting-place. I found the feet of Jesus, and there as I thought I sat down. It had seemed common work, carrying a basket of butcher's meat along the road; it did not stand comparison with my Philadelphia doings; till I remembered—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these"—and then I was content. Better this, or anything else, for my dear Master, than any other pleasure in the world. And all I do I may do *for him*. And he will shew me what, and how. So I finished my walk very happy.

Feb. 3.

OLIVE'S turn has come, sooner than either she or I looked for. Caroline is not well, and writes to beg that she may have Olive with her immediately. There is no question now of dresses or no dresses. Indeed Olive made none; no question, I mean; and she goes to-morrow. It stirs up all sorts of thoughts in me and some that I thought laid asleep. The whole of this winter, the whole of these three months, I have been so busy I have had no time for recollections and wishes; I do not think they were dead, but they slept. Indeed I know they were not dead, for they raise up their heads now with a good deal of life. What is it all about? It is right that Olive should go, and it is right that I should stay; and the work I do not mind at all; and yet it gives me a sort of sting of pain to think *where* she will go and what she will see, because I was there once. Is it very exceedingly selfish? I do not think it is that exactly. I am not sorry that Olive will have the pleasure; but it reminds me sharply that I will not; and that all those once enjoyed things are realities and not visions. I believe there is where the sting comes.

Feb. 4.

OLIVE is off. She left us after an early dinner. Mr. Binnacle brought his sleigh and took her and her little trunk, (my little trunk, the same,) to the railway. I felt as though my heart went off with her and left my body here, somewhat forlorn. However, that could not be right; and I went to work and made myself as busy as possible. I soon had the table cleared and the room to rights; got grandma's work for her; she is cutting strips for a rag carpet; and then sat down myself with my sewing. I should have liked a long walk in the snow, to brush away thoughts; but I could not leave granny. And to help my discomfitures, she was as discontented as I.

"Well, and now Olive's off!" she began. "Sich runnin's about I never did see. Folks can't stay still, these days."

"Grandmother, we have been very still for three months; we haven't moved out of our tracks."

"Three months! You think that's a long time to be quiet, do ye! You think folks kin afford to jump up and run round every three months, and leave their work standing?"

"I can take care of the work, without Olive."

"Ay, so Olive did when *you* were galivantin' off and away; but I believe in every one doin' his own. First you do mine, and then I'll do your'n; —nothing ever got along so."

"There's nothing special to be done now, grandma."

"Olive's got her sewin'."

"She'll get that done quicker in Philadelphia."

"She won't, if she spends her time like you did your'n—runnin' round everlastingly to look at sunthin' nother."

"But, granny, it is useful to see things; it'll do Olive ever so much good."

"What good does she want done to her? I should like to know. Ain't she well?"

"Perfectly, but—"

"Ain't she as handsome a girl as there is between Chesterfield and Boston?"

"Handsomer, I think."

"Then what does she want o' runnin' round the country on all sorts o' wheels, at this time o' year, when folks should go sleighing?"

"Grandma, things would just about suit you in an Eastern coffee house."

"I was born and brought up at the East, and so things there had ought to suit me; but I never see no coffee houses, and I don't know what you mean."

"I did not mean *this* East; I meant the country which in Europe they call the East. There they have coffee houses."

"In Palestine?"

"I don't know; I suppose so; but I was thinking of Egypt and Syria."

"And what do *you* know about it?"

"I heard one described."

"Well, what like is it?"

"Grandma, did you never read of coffee houses anywhere?"

"No, not I. Where should I? What are they called *coffee houses* for, anyhow?"

"Because people come there to drink coffee."

"Why can't they take it at home?

"They do, I suppose; but in those countries people drink a great deal of coffee, and live a great deal in the streets; and so they go into these coffee houses to refresh themselves."

"I don't see how you think *that* would suit me, child. Folks that spend all their time in the street ain't my sort. I believe in folks stayin' at hum and mindin' their business."

"These people do mind their business. But the weather is so pleasant they attend to it very much in the open air. So then they want coffee houses."

"A shiftless way, I should say. A kind o' bar room, ain't it?"

"O no, grandma."

"Well go on, if you have anything to tell! You are mighty dilly dally with it."

"Well, grandma, imagine we are in a street of an Eastern city—"

"I don't imagine no sich thing. I'm glad I ain't. I'm in Chesterfield, where I was born and bred up; and it's snowin' this minute, or this chimney wouldn't smoke so."

I made the fire burn clear, and sat down and

began again; for grandmother had got on the scent of a coffee house, so to speak, and would not quit it.

"I must imagine I am in the street of an Eastern city at any rate," I said. "And I go in, or if I were a man and were there I should, out of the street, into a large, high room. The floor is marble. The ceiling is beautiful with carved wood. The walls are wainscoted with the same wood, and not painted nor varnished, but just in its natural colours. In the middle of the floor is a marble basin and a fountain of water always playing—"

"*In the house?*" cried grandma.

"Yes."

"I don't believe no sich stuff."

"But it is true."

"It is nonsense, Desire Burgoyne! how's a spring to be bubbling up in the middle of this floor, for instance? and where would the water go to? Fiddle faddle!"

"But, grandma, they have little fountains playing in a great many of the houses in those cities. The rooms are most of them on the ground floor, and there is no difficulty about it. And in that warm climate the ground is never covered with snow, and the water is never frozen up,—it is always playing."

"Well, go ahead. I'd like to hear what you're comin' to. Sounds to me like a story."

I went on, with a kind of twinge from the words; it had been such a story to me.

"The room is very bright and light, for there are large windows on three sides. On the further side, you look through the windows and glass door into a little open place, where there are trees and grass; and there you see another marble basin, with another fountain playing. Then beyond this grassy space you see the houses of the city rising one behind the other up a side hill. And on the top of the hill, above all the houses, you see among the trees the ruins of an old castle that was built by Alexander."

"Alexander who?"

"Alexander the Great, to be sure," said I; thinking of the day when Mr. Iredell had told me all that, and I had heard, it as if it were a fairy tale. I remembered now just how he looked when he told it, driving without seeming to attend to the horse, and with his face most of the time turned towards me.

"Alexander the Great"—grandmother repeated, —"he lived before the flood!"

"O no, grandma!—he—"

"Pshaw, child! I know as well as you do when he lived. But it was ages ago; and I don't believe that no walls o' *his* buildin' are standin' yet."

"They are stone walls, grandma; it was a great, thick, strong castle wall."

"Well, those may believe it that like to. Go on."

"What's the use, if you do not believe me?" said I laughing.

"It serves to pass away the time; and I like to know what folks *kin* believe. Well, what next?"

"I have told you what sort of a place it is. You go in and take a seat on a rush-bottomed chair standing on this marble floor, beside the fountain. The waiter, a man in a gay cotton jacket and grey loose trowsers, brings up a little table for your coffee, and pushes another, bigger, rush-bottomed chair, up to your feet—"

"What for?" said grandma.

"That you may stretch out your feet upon it, as men like to do. But these chairs are only for you because you are a European; you have them and the marble floor all to yourself, unless perhaps there may be other Europeans in the coffee house at the same time. Or Americans, which comes to the same thing. The Turks do not sit on chairs. All round the room there is a raised step, about a foot high; and upon this, along by the wall, a wide seat, or bench, you would call it, spread with carpets. At the one end of the room there are two such seats or benches, one higher than the other. And on these seats, grandma, all round the room, you would see the people; sitting and lying, in all sorts of attitudes, enjoying their coffee; some reclining, some squatting on the carpets, but all taking their ease. And this I am describing to you is one of the better sort of coffee houses; and the people who visit it are for the most part rich and well-to-do; and their Eastern robes are in all sorts of gay colours and sometimes of rich stuffs; and

the men themselves are splendid men; well made, handsome, strong, and proud-looking."

"And they come there just to drink coffee?"

"They drink coffee, and they smoke, and they read the newspaper, and they talk. Some have pipes with long flexible tubes and rich mouth-pieces; others have no pipes. But all of them have taken off their overshoes, and you see them, the overshoes, in a regular row all around on the floor."

"I thought you said they had such fine weather all the time?"

"Yes, they do; these are not india-rubbers, grandma; but every well-behaved man in those regions leaves his walking shoes off when he goes into a church or into company."

"I should think they'd catch their death."

"No; it is lovely, gentle weather. And if it wasn't, they would have something else on their feet, I suppose. I think it is a famous custom. I wish our men followed it."

"Our men don't stop their work in the middle of the day to drink coffee."

"But, grandma, they stop for dinner; and they stop for luncheon in harvest time and in haying time."

"That ain't like sittin' down to smoke with their shoes off. If ever I heard of anything shiftless, I think that is shiftless!"

"I wish I could see them though," said I. "But women do not go there."

"They don't! How come you to know all about it?"

"A gentleman told me."

"What gentleman?"

"A gentleman I saw in Philadelphia. He had been in those coffee houses often himself."

"Then I guess he ain't worth attendin' to. I wouldn't have much to do with him, if I was you."

"I am not likely to have much to do with him," I said, with a laugh which I could not help at grandma's very wide conclusions.—"As he lives in Philadelphia and I in Chesterfield."

"Perhaps Olive'll see him now."

I was silent. Perhaps she would. I hope I am not envious, but the thought was not pleasant. Neither had it come now for the first time. I forgot the coffee houses; till grandmother recalled me to the thread of my story, by asking me if I had told the whole of it.

"I did not tell you about the coffee, grandma."

"What about the coffee? I 'spose coffee is coffee, ain't it? all the world over."

"No. They would not like your coffee at all; and you would not drink theirs. But it is good. Away in one corner of the room is the place for making the coffee; a nice brass stove, with red hot coals, where it is prepared fresh for every customer."

"That's ridiculous," said grandma. "If I was goin' to make coffee for fifty people, I'd make it in a good sized kettle, and be done with it."

"But those Easterns are particular. They would not drink coffee that had stood awhile. There is a man, in a light cotton dress, who attends to that part of the business; and when you go in and sit down at first, up he comes to you with a little brass tray and a fiery coal upon it; by which you may light your cigar, if you do not smoke a Turkish pipe."

"What's a Turkish pipe like?"

"Like a glass vase, part of it, which sits on the ground. From this vase comes the tube of the pipe, several feet long, with a mouth-piece of metal or amber or something else. It takes a good while to smoke one of these pipes; and Europeans are generally too much in a hurry. But the European smokes his cigar; and the waiter brings him his coffee, fresh made, in a tiny little china cup; fragrant, and black and thick, with all the grounds in it."

"All the grounds in it!" cried grandma. "Not cleared!"

"Not cleared at all; and you drink it and you like it; and while you drink it, by degrees, you get an opportunity to look at the strange figures around you. When you first go in you cannot look much, except in stolen glances."

"Why not, pray?"

"It wouldn't be polite. And they are very polite, the people around you. Although you are a stranger, and maybe the only European in the room, nobody stares; indeed nobody seems to take

any sort of notice. They are too well-bred. And of course you do not stare at them."

"I'll engage I would, if I got a chance. I believe eyes were made to see with."

"I would like to see what one could see in such a place," I repeated, remembering how Mr. Iredell had described to me what *he* saw. "For instance, grandma, you might see an old gentleman in a flowered chintz robe, with green trowsers, and a turban on his head of some thin stuff striped with yellow."

"That's a dress for an *old* gentleman, is it?" said grandma. "I would like to know what the young ones put on."

"Well, one young man's dress, I remember, was of dark blue cloth. Very wide trowsers, ending in tight-fitting gaiters, which were buttoned very ornamentally at the side and embroidered all over, with cord or lace sewed on. He had a velvet vest ornamented in the same way; and a loose jacket. Under the jacket he wore a gay silk scarf wound round his body; and in his scarf one man puts his purse and another man sticks his dagger,—just as it happens."

"Who told you all that rigmarole?"

"I told you, grandma; a gentleman I saw in Philadelphia."

"What is his name?"

"It is not a name of any of the people about here; it is not a name you know."

"Is it a name *you* know? that's what I ask you. Then I'll tell you whether I know it."

"The name is Iredell, grandma."

"Odell," she repeated. "Do you think I never heard of Odells before? There's heaps of 'em to Warmington. I don't think much of 'em neither, and never did. Did he come from Warmington?"

"I think not."

"Most likely he did. I wouldn't have much to do with him, if I was you. Did you believe all that stuff he told you?"

"He said he had seen it, grandma."

"Well—there's queer things in the world, but I guess he put on some o' that. I wish't you'd put on the kettle, child, and let's have tea."

"Why, grandma, it's early yet. What do you want tea for?"

"O I don't know. I'd like to have it, and have it over."

So I humoured her, and we had a very early supper; and then she went to bed early, to have that over too, I suppose; and I sat alone. I had the company of a good fire; else all was dark and still, within and without; as dark, that is, as the snow would let it be, under the stars. But I had shut the shutters, and was very glad of the glow and sparkle of my fire. I sat and thought. My telling the story of the coffee house to grandma had brought back everything about Philadelphia and my stay there; and there came upon me a kind of fire and rage of desire for study, for knowledge, for a rich and wide mental life, like Mr. Iredell's. I never knew anybody else with so much:

it is natural that when I think of it I think of him, and when I think of him I think of it. One thing I am determined, too; I will do what I can. I will not be content with ignorance, nor bury my real self under the crowd of common, every-day things which fill my life and everybody else's life here. Not but people read, and think too, in Chesterfield; for they do both; yet nevertheless the interests of every day for them are about petty things; and of course their horizon of actual experience is very limited. I thirst for something higher and better. I do seem to be shut out from it; but at least I will do what I can for myself.

I sat before my fire pondering all this, and somehow feeling the hills of Chesterfield valley close round me and bar me in. I found I was longing to be in Philadelphia; and then I knew I was out of my way. Is not life "to do the will of God"? I remembered. Well his will has placed me here. The hills of Chesterfield can shut me in no longer and no closer than he pleases. He knows what sort of life he wishes me to lead; and step by step he will let me know it also. Am I not willing? Just now here is my place; and to take care of the house and grandma, my work; and if it is the work my Lord wants me to do, it is the very best I *can* do. What he chooses for me must be the best; and done for Christ, it cannot be mean or ignoble. I thought all this, but I felt the tears coming; and I went down on my knees on the hearth and prayed, to be made quite right, quite pure, a good child

and a willing servant, howsoever my Lord may choose to use me.

I was quite rested in heart when I rose up; rested and happy; and then I could consider things quietly. First, I may do all my work for the Lord; and my work at present is the house and grandma. Then next, it is perfectly right, and even a duty, to cultivate my higher self and make of my mental life the very most I can. So I decided I would, though without any very clear knowledge where or how to begin. All the books in the house I have read. Where can I get more? And I would like to study languages. I will begin and read Voltaire's "Charles XII." over again; that will help my French at least.

March 10.

I HAVE been too busy, ever since my last writing, to have much time for speculation. I have read Chas. XII. through, however; and then I found one book in the house I had never yet read; a close printed volume; "Keith on Prophecy." So as my studies in other directions were for the present hemmed in, I concluded the best thing I could do would be to study the Bible. Perhaps I could do no better thing, thought I; and a delightful thing I am finding it.

March 20.

I WAS deep in Daniel, and turning over the leaves of my Bible with great curiosity and delight, finding such beautiful things!—when grandma broke out—

"It's kind o' lonesome and tiresome with Olive gone out o' the house! I wish't she'd get through her visit and come back."

I roused up. "Why, grandma," said I, "we have been getting along very nicely without her. Don't I keep things in order?"

"The house is in order," said grandma. "But gracious! one wants sunthin' besides a house and one's victuals. It's as still as if there warn't nobody within a hundred miles; and my head is gettin' to spin with bein' so empty. Olive'd put some life into things."

Now I knew that my grandmother has no special longing for Olive on account of any favouritism; indeed I know she prefers me; so I felt rebuked. I had been a little selfishly seeking my own pleasure, and leaving her out.

"Shall I read to you, grandma?" I asked, though my heart sank at what I was losing.

"Anythin' to keep my head together. What ha' you got there?"

"The Bible, grandmother."

"The Bible! that's a pretty old book. I've read it all a hundred times."

"I don't believe it is exhausted, even for you,

in spite of that fact. It isn't for me. Let me read you what I am reading."

"Go on," said grandma. "Maybe it'll put me to sleep. Anyhow, it'll be a v'ice instead o' silence. I can't abide silence. Seems as if everybody was dead."

It did not put her to sleep. On the contrary, she roused up and became thoroughly interested. I read to her about the history of the Jews, and the prophecies going before of what that history would be if they proved disobedient; and grandma called for her Bible and would trace out the words of the prophecy for herself, and was interested to that point that she quite forgot to be in a hurry for tea; and after tea would have me begin again.

March 30.

THE spring is making herself known in our valley, and even upon the hillsides. There are tresses of the alder hanging out by the brook; and the willows are shewing green; and other tree buds are swelling. Yet the snow lies on the northern slopes; and the country looks more bleak and bare than it does in mid-winter. Nevertheless it *is* spring; and two days more will bring us April; and then things will make a jump. I do not suppose Olive will be in any hurry to come home until the jump has been made, and May will be bringing us warm airs again. Meanwhile I am too busy to

be lonely. I read now a great deal to grandma; perhaps I learn quite as much that way; at any rate she takes great pleasure in it. And so do I.

To-day came one of Olive's rare letters. I read it to myself, and then to grandma.

"I can't make out much of what she's doin'," was her comment.

"She is enjoying herself, I guess," I said with a little bit of a sigh, which did not make me proud of myself. I do not know what it came from. So am I enjoying myself, every day; and I am sure I want Olive to have all the pleasure she can get. What for should I draw a long breath about it? I do believe there are things in oneself, about as hidden from oneself as anything in other people ever can be. But grandma went on.

"She's lookin' out for number one. Olive allays does."

"Don't we all, grandma?"

"Olive don't take no particler care what becomes o' the rest o' the numbers."

"O grandma!" said I. "Olive is a good housekeeper. You know that."

"She's tol'rable good at keepin' anythin' if she takes a fancy to it. I don't see as she cares much what becomes o' you."

"You forget; she is the eldest always. And she cannot help what becomes of me," I said with a smile. "Caroline wants her, and she is quite right to stay; and it is doing me no harm. Aren't we having a nice time, grandma?"

"Why don't Caroline want *you?*"

"She had me, two whole months."

"Olive'll stay three."

It is grandma's way; but I found it was not a good way for me to listen to. The more I read and the less I think, the better. So I determined, that as soon as we have got through "Keith on Prophecy," I will go down to Deacon Binnacle's or somewhere and see what more I can borrow in the same line.

April 20:

I HAVE come to the end of Keith. So, according to my purpose, I set out this afternoon on a chase after some new reading. The day was so sweet as only some days in spring can be. The air mild and still and sunny; so still that one's ear seemed invited to hear the rushing of the brook and the twitter of the birds; for birds were busy and making themselves both heard and seen. And there came a spicy smell from the woods; and the light on everything was that soft, gentle, promising blessing of the sun, which brings with it the prophecy of all summer joys and fruitfulness. And a nameless promise besides, which goes beyond the things of this earth. What is it? To what does this breath of spring lift one's thoughts? or rather one's spirit, for *thoughts* are definite. I tried to spell it out, as I went down the valley. Still, oh

how still it was; and yet I noticed every little sound with a quick intentness that I miss on ordinary days. The brook was music; some crows seemed to be telling the good news, that spring has come; far off on the hills somewhere I heard the stroke of an axe; it came clear and distinct to my ear; the gratulations of the birds were absolutely ecstatic sometimes, when I passed near a flock of them in the trees. They are glad; it is the time of life and love and freedom beginning for them, where all has been bound under chains of frost for so long. And as I went musing, it darted into my head, the question, is *that* what spring promises to the spirits of men? Is *that* the language of this wonderful balm and hush and colour of earth and air? Is it the faint image of what will be one day in human history, when the bondage of sin and evil is broken up, and the Sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings? I stood still by the fence to think about it. Is this wonderful hush and sweetness the fore telling of what will be over all the earth when the Lord reigns? It will mean that to me, I believe, henceforward. It is all promise, promise; promise that makes one's heart ache, it is so delicious, and so pure, and such a contrast with all that exists now in the realm of human affairs. Unearthly fair, unearthly sweet, I hardly know why it pressed upon my heart with a sense almost of pain. Then I thought of those words—

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up,

my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

That is the voice of Christ to his church; but when is the time of it? It must be in what the Bible calls "the morning," I should think; "the time of the restitution of all things;" and what is that but the spring of the year? The time of those words—"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." And those other words—"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon. . . Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes."

Will not that be spring? I stood by the fence,

looking and thinking and tasting all this as if for the first time. What a rich walk my walk was becoming to me! But I could not remember accurately all those words I have written above, and I did not want to wait till I got home. I thought I would accomplish two things at the first house where I went in. And then a whimsical idea struck me. The first house I came to, of course, was Deacon Parsons'. Not much chance of finding new reading matter there; but at least I could find a Bible.

Mrs. Parsons was sitting up, and the deacon was keeping her company, and I believe reading the Bible himself; for it lay open before him. The old lady was very glad to see me, and as usual wanted me to tell her all the news. I believe she would like to have me give an account of my breakfast and dinner; so it were only anything that she had not heard before.

"What books have you got in the house, Deacon Parsons?" I asked after talking a while.

"Books? what do ye want o' books?" was his answer.

"Just reading; that is what books are good for, you know. What have you in the house?"

"I don't think much o' no readin' but one book," said he slowly. "And that one,—I guess, you've got it already."

"But I like to read other things too."

"Well," said the deacon, "some folks doos; some folks doos. But I should hev thought, you'd hev

done readin' enough all the time you was to Bosting to school."

"O no," said I. "That was only getting ready to read."

"Du tell, ef you was all that time a larnin' that!" said Mrs. Parsons. "Why, my 'Manda's little gal six year old, she kin read a'ready, fustrate."

"Have you no books really, deacon?" I persisted.

"Ain't many on 'em," said he, rubbing his very grey whiskers,—"ain't many on 'em; and I hain't much idee where they be. Mother, ha' you got 'em put away somewheres?"

But I found it would be a matter of time to reach the books; so I would not wait for that.

"It's a beautiful day, deacon," I remarked, in pursuance of my whim.

"Seasonable," said the deacon. "It's seasonable."

"What does such a day in April make you think of, Deacon Parsons?"

"Wall," said he slowly, half smiling at me, as if wondering what I was at,—"it's good fur the pastur'; that's what I think. The cows'll get a good bite soon, and the milk'll tell of it. The long winter's hard on the critters."

I went off. The next house where I stopped was the blacksmith's. It was just his dinner time; and he had come in from his workshop across the way and sat reading. It is a wonder he is so nice

as he usually keeps himself, for his wife lets everything go at sixes and sevens. To-day I found the floor not swept, her table set with an untidy cloth, and herself very uncared for indeed. It is the only house in the place I know, where things are not at least tolerably neat. It's a pity; Chandler himself is such a fine fellow. So I always thought him, and so I think him still; and yet, to-day everything in the place jarred upon some nerve or other, Chandler was in his shirt sleeves, sitting by the open window, Mrs. Chandler had made up such a furious fire in her stove. And the thick curly hair was in disorder; and his shoes were unbrushed; and his clothes were ill-fitting and coarse. I had seen all that fifty times before without annoyance. To-day, I suppose, in the wild, sweet, spring world of the valleys and the hills, I had been really living a while in Mr. Iredell's sphere; and the village blacksmith and his surroundings were a come-down. However, his kind, handsome face looked very bright at the sight of me, and I reproached myself. As I said, he had a book open on his knee; and as usual plunged into discussion.

"I am just thinkin', Desire," he began, "how queer the world is!"

"In what respect?" said I laughing at the divergence of my thoughts and his.

"It is like the wheels of a watch,—wheels and wheels; and one wheel turns another; and the least little thing, the smallest pin, out of place, would

stop the movement—or again, make it so fast that all would go to destruction."

"Well?" said I.

"Well,—it stands to reason, don't it, that the little things count for as much as the big ones?"

"I don't know—that would be comfortable doctrine for the little things."

"I don't mean that all *folks* count alike; not by no means! I'm talkin' o' things. But it's kind o' awful, ain't it, to think that there be no little things!"

"Do hear him, Desire!" his wife began. "Ain't you edified? That's the way he goes on—his head in the clouds. No little things! There's a mouse in my cupboard; ain't that a little thing?—and I can't catch it, that's more."

"You make *that* a great thing, my dear," said Chandler; "and it won't be a little thing when I find a trap to suit ye. But now, Desire, look at it. Suppos'n' Alexander hadn't died when he did?—"

"What Alexander?" I asked, so innocently that Mr. Chandler burst into a broad laugh.

"Alexander of Macedon, to be sure. If he hadn't died when he did—who kin tell how much faster the world's history would have moved on? It is true, I know, his successors did carry on his plans; but they couldn't do it like *he* would ha' done. He had a wonderful long head, Desire; and a mighty sharp eye for seein' things! Look how he pitched those cities all over Asia!—I'm tryin' to study out

the machinery o' the world, Desire; and it bothers me. Suppose a great many things. Suppose Napoleon had not lost the battle of Waterloo; and what hindered him, *I* believe, was just a hollow way that he didn't know of, that sp'iled his famous charge of cavalry. Suppos'n' he *had* known of it? Suppos'n' he hadn't lost that battle? How fur the men was, that built that road, from thinkin' it was goin' to turn the course of this world's history! Suppos'n' any little thing hadn't been as it was? I tell you, little things is growin' kind o' awful to me."

"I don't see, for my part, how a Christian man kin suppose anything of the sort," began Mrs. Chandler. "How could anythin' ha' been different? when you know it was all arranged and settled beforehand?"

"My dear," said her husband gravely, "there you are gettin' into the divine decrees—"

"O don't get into the divine decrees!" said I. "Let me tell you a story, that I put myself in mind of just now; and after that I will tell what I came after."

They were both gravely eager for the story.

"A man somewhere, in Germany I believe, laid a wager; that he would speak to a hundred different people in the streets of the city, and he would make them all answer him in exactly the same words."

"But that's ridiculous," said Mrs. Chandler, resting on her broom handle. "He couldn't do it.

You mean, the very same words, neither more nor less?"

"The very same; neither more nor less."

"They were friends of his," suggested her husband; "the hundred people, I mean; it might ha' been all agreed upon between them."

"No, they were strangers; it was anybody he happened to meet."

"And they were all to say exactly the same words back? I should say, it couldn't be done."

"But he did it."

"And the hundred gave him the same answer?"

"Precisely the same. And he gained his wager."

"I'd like to hear what he said?"

"He said of course the same thing to every one. He said, 'Meyer has failed.'"

"And what did they answer?"

"Every one of them answered, 'What Meyer?' You see, Meyer is a very common name there, like Smith or Walker with us."

I never saw Mr. Chandler laugh as he did now. But his wife did not catch the point; and only remarked that she was sure *that* was a very little thing. Then I preferred my request for new reading matter.

"I hain't got a thing that ain't as old as the hills," Mr. Chandler said. "There's a book I want to get hold of; Mommsen's Rome; I've seen notice of it in the paper; but it'll have to wait till I go to Boston, I expect. It ain't to be had no nearer And there's another book I'd like to see. Some

one has been poking into the old heaps of ruins at Nineveh and findin' out lots o' wonderful things, they say. Is it true, do you think?"

"O yes, it is true. I have seen the books."

"You have! Well, I'll see 'em one day, I hope. Be you goin'? Try Farmer Binnacle's for a book. That's your likeliest."

I went there. Till I got there, I had another interval of communing only with the spring day and loveliness. It swept me up and away from Chesterfield, though it was through Chesterfield I was walking. I had left the blacksmith's house without putting my question; and as the spring air met me without, I recollected, and ran back.

"Mr. Chandler," said I, putting my head in at the door, "what does such a spring day make you think of?"

"The day?" said he, raising his head to look first at me and then out of the window. "What it makes me think of? Well—it kinder puts me in mind o' the clink o' the anvil. The folks'll all be comin' along to get their critters new shod."

I ran on. How unlike the world is to different people! How far the life of one is from the life of another! even though they live under the same roof. But that seems to me a great loss to both parties.

I did not expect to find the farmer at home; but I did find him. He was laid up for the time with a wounded hand. I asked him what books he had, and received permission to go and search for my-

self. The books were in a very chill, unused room, and my survey had needs be hasty. Sermons, I found, and histories; an encyclopædia in many volumes; the "Beauties of Scotland"; the "Christian Observer"; Cooper's "Spy"; Young's "Night Thoughts," and Thompson's "Seasons." At last I came away with a volume of Lowth on Isaiah; not what I wanted, but the best I could get.

"It's a lovely day, Mr. Binnacle," said I.

"Very. What's your hurry? Stay and have supper with us."

"I must go home and give grandmother hers."

"Ay. You've had a pretty busy winter of it."

"Yes," said I. "Busy, and good."

"When's that sister o' your'n comin' home?"

"She does not say."

"What's she doin' yonder?"

"Havin' a good time,—" said Mrs. Binnacle.

"Likely. But I shouldn't wonder ef Desire here had ben havin' jes' as good a time. Hey, Desire?"

"I enjoyed my visit in Philadelphia—" I said evasively.

"Ay. *Somethin'* got hold o' you there, I see that! When are you goin' agin?"

"Never, perhaps. I'll wait till Olive gets home, at any rate."

"I shouldn't wonder ef she'd stay fur good, ef somebody asked her."

"I should think somebody might ask her," remarked Mrs. Binnacle. "Olive's a right sightly girl; and smart too, she is."

"What does she say she's doin'?" the farmer went on. "You kin tell somethin' by what a girl *don't* say. What does she give out keeps her?"

"She is not a good correspondent," I answered. "She does not tell us much. And I must go home now. Mr. Binnacle, do you know what a beautiful day it is?"

"I guess I do!" said he. "Don't I know the ploughin' that had oughter be done? and I can't stir, with this hand."

"It is as soft as May out of doors. What does such a day put you in mind of, Mr. Binnacle?"

"Put's me in mind o' my courtin' days," he said with a twinkle in his eye. "I married my old woman in spring time, Desire. It's the best time in the year to get married. I'd like to see you do the same."

As I walked home, the thought came over me that probably that wish would not be fulfilled. I never had the thing come into my mind, I suppose, three times in my life, seriously; now, as the farmer had brought it up, it occurred to me, walking home through the sweet still afternoon, that it is very likely indeed I never shall get married. The prospect does not dismay me. Indeed I cannot think of anybody who could ask me whom I would have. Better go alone through life's journey, than with the wrong sort of a travelling companion. Yet all the way home the air to me was full of promise; vague and sweet and ethereal and penetrating. It might be vague, but it penetrated:

and my heart took the still blessing and was glad. Promise, promise! the air was full of it; the sunlight shimmered with it; and the fragrance abroad was as if a thousand cups of happiness were opening in the recesses of the woods, in place of the wild flowers and ferns. Suppose I do spend my life alone, which no doubt is not the happiest way for most women; what then? Happiness, like everything else, is in the Lord's hand; and here as in other things it is true, "Man doth not live by bread alone."

May 5.

OLIVE has come home, looking well. I never saw her look so well. She has not been hurt by pleasure either; for I never knew her more busy and hearty in her work than she is now. It is a great deal easier certainly, to have two than one to take care of everything; but Olive just now is not satisfied with our ordinary way of going on; she finds new activities for herself and me. I had the house all cleaned and nice. Now she talks of paint. The paint is all worn off the woodwork inside, she says very truly, and it looks shabby. I know it looks shabby; but I suggested that repainting would be an expense.

"It wouldn't be much. I will do it myself," said Olive; "and you will help. We can put it on; and a pot of paint does not cost anything to speak of.

The floor wants it too. However *that* can wait. But we must have a new carpet or something, for the other room."

"Olive! we cannot."

"We must. I'll tell you. In Philadelphia people use in summer a sort of Indian mat; that does not cost much, and looks pretty and neat and is cool."

"That is good only for warm weather," I remonstrated.

"I don't care about it except for warm weather," she answered. "In winter we hardly use that room at all. It is only for summer. A mat, and some new white curtains, would make it look very nice."

"Who's comin'?" said grandma, who overheard some of this talk.

"Nobody—that I know of," Olive answered.

"Seems to me you're takin' a heap o' trouble for nobody."

"For myself," said Olive. "I don't like to have things quite so different from other people. And I am not going to."

So *she* feels it too; only, it seems, in a different way. Presently grandma began again. I should say, that Olive had been telling us a great deal about how she and Caroline passed the time; what they did and whom they saw and where they went.

"Did you see anybody of the name of Odell there?"

"Odell? No. There are no Odells in Philadelphia, that I know of."

"It's no loss to Philadelphy," said grandma. "But Desire saw a Mr. Odell there, that told her heaps o' stories; stories as high as the house."

"O grandma!" I broke in. "I only told you one."

"Odell?" repeated Olive. "Do you mean *Iredell?*" she added, turning to me.

"I suppose so," said I. "Grandma didn't understand the name."

"Did you see Mr. Iredell?"

"I saw *a* Mr. Iredell. Most likely it is the same.

Olive was silent a minute, picking up bits of lint from the floor, and then she said,

"Did you see much of him?"

"I met him, more than once."

"Rather an elderly man?"

"No, not *elderly* at all; not what you would call a very young man. I suppose he is over thirty."

"O yes; he is over thirty,—a good deal. Not a young man by any means."

"Well, what of him?" demanded grandma. "Did he tell you stories too?"

"What sort of stories?" Olive asked, with a queer expression. I could not make out what it meant.

"Fairy stories, most like," said grandma.

"No, he did not tell me any fairy stories," Olive said.

She said no more; the talk turned upon some thing else; but it left me with the oddest feeling that Olive did not wish me to know, or to have known Mr. Iredell. It is perfectly unreasonable, and indeed impossible; and yet somehow her voice, or her look, or both, made that impression on me. I noticed also that she did not look at me when she was speaking of him. She kept her eyes away.

May 24.

OLIVE has been as good as her word. We have procured pots of paint, both white and brown; and she and I have put it on. The other room looks very fresh and nice; the new white curtains are made, of some old material, but they do not betray it; and Olive and I have fabricated cords and tassels of lampwick for them, and very pretty they are. The mat is down too. I did grumble a little about that; for I told Olive I would rather have some fresh calico dresses for myself for the summer; my old ones have passed their beauty; but she said it was absolutely necessary to make the house look a little nice; and I could do over my white dress, and a white dress always looks well.

"Provided it is just from the ironing table," I said.

"O well; it can always be washed and ironed, you know *I* am not getting any new dresses."

However, that is hardly a set-off to my plea, for Caroline has given her dresses very fit for summer.

Then Olive is working a table cover, for the table in that room; ornamenting it with a various-coloured border. It did not cost much, she says; and I suppose that is true; and it will, no doubt dress up the room very decidedly. I observed that we had better, while we were about it, do something for the kitchen, which is indeed one of the pleasantest places in the house, and the one where we live most of the time.

"O nobody will come there," she answered.

"Who do you expect will come into the other room?" I said, laughing at her. "We see the greater part of our visiters in the kitchen, besides."

Olive made no intelligible answer; and without her help I went on, and gave the old woodwork a coat of brown paint, which makes it look very neat. Do not I like pretty things and dainty arrangements, as well as Olive or anybody? Do I not like them *dearly?* If I never thought much about it before, I knew that I did, that afternoon when Mr. Iredell took me to see his mother. There was not an item of all the elegant and pretty and dainty arrangements about that place, in-doors or out, that did not go to my very heart with the satisfying sense of completeness and harmony it produced. Would I not like, as well as Olive, to order our own little home on the same principles, even if on a very different scale? But we have

not one inch of margin beyond our necessary expenses; our little incomings need to be handled judiciously and with great care if we would pay everybody and have a few shillings left for a book or two at the end of the year. And as long as the question lies between the furnishing of the house and the furnishing of my own mind, I confess, I prefer the latter; and I believe I would rather even dress myself properly than clothe our parlour windows. I said as much.

"It is necessary, Desire," Olive answered me. "You don't think so, but I know it. *This* we cannot do without—the other we can."

"*I* can, you mean. You are supplied."

"Well, you have your white; and you always look nice in white. What can you have better?"

Granted. But I do not care to be always washing and ironing that one white dress. And the ironing always falls to me; and the washing too, when Amanda happens to be ill or away. So I indulged in a little private grumbling. However, I am afraid I was selfish about it; for Olive is very much delighted with the success of her work. So it seems I ought to be.

June 2.

SUMMER is come. And she is come really; she has entered our valleys along with June; and the flutter of her garments and the breath of her

perfumes is over all the hills. We have not room in our little garden for many flowers; but there is one great bush of sweet roses between the windows of the house, and it is absolutely full of creamy white roses, each one a treasury of fragrance. The air brings the sweetness in with every stir of it, and it comes to me now at my upper window where I am writing. The hemlocks are bright with their young green shoots; I can pick out their tall cones from the other trees on the hillsides as far as I can see them. Down in the little courtyard there are bunches of lilies of the valley and a bed of mignonette; but the lilies of the valley are passed, and the mignonette has not come to its sweetness; what I breathe with every breath I draw, is the perfume of the white roses, and now and then a waft of honeysuckle from a little distance. I run on about all this, because I do not like to come to the real record which must follow.

They say, there are days, and hours, which are turning points in people's life-history; often, too, which is rather frightful to think, without the knowledge or consciousness of the people. Has this been such a day for me? and what have I done? I could do no other than I did; and yet I wish I had not done it. I cannot bear to write the account down; it seems as if that would be fixing it faster than it is. But that cannot be. What is done is done. I may as well look at it calmly, if I can. That is just what I cannot do. All my nature seems in a whirl and confusion and,

I am afraid, uproar. It will be good to write down what the uproar is all about.

I was sitting here in my room this morning, ripping up my white dress, and smelling the roses. I shall never smell those roses and honeysuckles again, I think, without remembering this day. I was enjoying the delicious whiffs of the scent all the while I was at my work. Then came in Olive with a letter in her hand, and looking somehow excited; though why she should look excited about it, or about anything, I could not conceive.

"Here is a letter Mr. Binnacle has just brought." She said; "and I do not know whether it is for you or for me. He was coming past the post-office and stopped, and brought our paper and this letter."

"Where is it from?" said I taking it in my hand, "Philadelphia! But it is not Caroline's writing."

"No, nor Sandie Birkenstall's. I cannot make out whether that middle letter is a D or not. 'Miss D.' or 'Miss O. Burgoyne.' Which is it?"

"Why it is a D," I said. "Don't you see? An O has not that curl at the back."

"Then it is yours?" said my sister. "Do open it! I think it is a mistake, and that it is meant for me."

"Why should you think so?" I said, looking up at her as I prepared to open the envelope. "Do you know whom it is from?"

"Take care! don't break that seal. Here—cut the paper," she said, catching up my scissors and giving them into my hand.

That made me look at the seal. It was to be sure a large wax seal, with a beautiful impression upon it. Now first a thought darted into my head. I had seen that swan's head before. The rest of the device had no particular meaning for me; but I recognized at the top a swan's head.

"This looks like a coat of arms," I said, with my heart beating suddenly.

"It *is* a coat of arms—of course," said Olive; "but what you have to do with it I cannot imagine. I think there is a mistake. Do open it, child, or let me."

I silently cut the paper and took out the contained sheet of note paper. I unfolded it. Then I looked first at the signature. I knew perfectly well—I do not know *how* I knew—whose signature it would be. "Maximilian Iredell." I looked at that, with eyes too astonished to believe what they saw; and then at last, with curiosity growing, they ran over the writing that stood above the signature. But I wished Olive would go away, and not stand there watching me. However, even so, I half forgot her.

It was a note from Mr. Iredell. I read it in such a whirl of feelings that I cannot now put down the exact expressions he used, or I would do it. The writing was not long; it began, "My dear Miss Burgoyne,"—and it went on to say, very pleasantly, that he hoped I had not forgotten him, and that he was so far from forgetting me that he wished very much to see me again. He could not

hear that there was any chance of my coming again soon to Philadelphia; and so, he must ask, would I let him come to Chesterfield?

That was about the amount of it; but surprise, and pleasure, and excitement, almost I think took away from me the power of clear vision. Things swam, before my mental and before my bodily eye at once.

"May I see it?" said Olive; and while I did not know either how to say no or yes, she stooped and took the paper from my hand. She ran it over very fast, for she almost immediately laid it down again, and without saying one word left the room.

Then I read through my letter again. *Read* it, I say; my eyes took in the forms of the words, and my mind swallowed, as it were, the meaning of them; is that reading? Swallowed, as a thirsty man drinks a glass of water; without properly tasting it, yet taking in the refreshment and the sense of refreshment with his whole being. For the moment nothing else exists, to him, save his thirst and that which is quenching it. So it was with me. Yet I did not know I had been thirsty; consciously thirsty for *this* I had not been; but not the less grateful and sweet was the draught I drank. I know so much as that; just what the draught consisted of, I am not so sure. I was delighted that Mr. Iredell had not forgotten me; the knowledge sent a warm glow to my heart and all over me. It was a great pleasure to get a letter from him, so tangible a token of his remembrance.

And then further, that he should wish to see me; should care so much about it that he would take the trouble to come to Chesterfield, all that journey. Was it possible, that as I had thought with so much pleasure of him, *he* had also thought of *me?* How could it be possible? And a rill of secret gladness seemed to be flowing into my heart, distilled from I know not what sources, but flowing and increasing and swelling, till my heart grew very full. I knew now that I had thought a great deal of Mr. Iredell; indeed I did know that before; the difference was, that now I allowed myself to be conscious of it and felt myself justified. If he thought of me, then certainly I had a right to think of him. I got no further than that. I did not even think *then* of the happiness of seeing him again and seeing him here, of hearing him talk and looking into his face; which it always does me or did me good to do. I never saw any face like his face. It is particularly grave, and full of thought; but so strong, and so sweet, and so bright. And no doubt the very fine outlines and features help the effect, as surely they increase the pleasure of it.

I sat dreaming, in a maze, with my letter on my lap, and not forming thoughts into any definite form at all. Only feeling gladness and joy, in the same way that I breathed the smell of the roses and the honeysuckle; in an undefined sense of infinite comfort; and how long I might have sat so, gazing out into the summer air, smelling the roses,

and doing nothing, I cannot tell. I do not know how long I had sat there, when Olive came back again. She looked odd, and anxious; and I eyed her with a sort of vague wonder that she should break in upon my privacy and my pleasure so. However, she came quite in and sat down, and my wonder increased as to what was to follow. I could never have guessed.

"Are you going to answer that letter, Desire?" she began abruptly; and I noticed there were two spots of colour on her cheeks that looked feverish.

"Answer?" I repeated. "I—yes, I suppose so. I must answer it, of course."

"What are you going to say?"

"What am I going to say?—" I echoed.

"Yes. If you answer, you must say something. *What* will you say?"

"I haven't thought about my answer"—I said rather stammeringly.

"You must think about it, though, if you are to write it. What will you say to Mr. Iredell's request?"

"I—of course there is but one thing to say," I answered, feeling my cheeks colour, but I think because Olive looked at me so.

"You would tell him he may come?"

"I think so. Why not?"

"You will tell him he may come. Now, Desire, do you know what he will conclude, if you send such an answer?"

"Conclude? he will conclude I should be glad to see him, I suppose. That would be true."

"He will think that; but he will think a great deal more. Desire, if you write such an answer, do you know it would be the same thing as telling the gentleman you are willing to marry him."

"Olive!" I exclaimed, and I know my face was flaming,—"there is not a word of such a thing. How can you! There is not a word of such a thing. There is no question of such a thing."

"Maybe not; but there will be, if you send such an answer. Such an answer will be quite equivalent to saying, 'Here I am; come and take me.'"

"Olive, that is ridiculous! How can simple words mean so much more than they are meant to mean?"

"*You* are simple; else you would understand it. You are very young, Desire, and you do not know the ways and customs of the world. That is what he would understand your letter to mean; that is what he would think you meant him to understand. Are you prepared to tell Mr. Iredell you are ready to be his wife?"

"He has not asked me," I said, feeling ready to drop into the earth with shame at having to say and hear such things, and very angry with Olive.

"You do not want him to ask you, do you?"

"I never thought of such a thing."

"I supposed not. In that case you had better let me answer the letter"

"You!—*You* answer it! And what sort of an answer would you send?"

"I should know how to answer him properly, so as to compromise nobody."

We were both silent a minute.

"But what sort of answer, then, do you suppose he expected?" I began.

"Everything depends upon the how and the who. I am not sure that letter was meant for you at all."

"But it is sent to me. Here is my name."

"My name too, with the exception of that doubtful D. It would be easy to confuse the names."

"But had you any—reason,—to expect a letter like this?" I asked, feeling as if the life was dying away out of me.

"Pray let me ask, had *you*, Desire?"

I was silent, until she repeated the question.

"Had you any reason to expect such a letter from Mr. Iredell? I never heard you mention his name."

"I never heard you mention it, voluntarily, Olive."

"I saw a great deal of him, though. But you do not answer me. Had you any reason to look for a letter like this from him?"

"I did not look for any letter from him, at all."

"No. I think it would be safe then to let me answer it. Safe, and proper."

"But what would you say?"

"I will see, when I come to answer it. It will not be easy, but I can do it."

"But what—what will he say, that I should let *you* write in reply to *my* letter?"

"I am not sure that it is yours; as I said. Why see, Desire; you are just a child; not eighteen yet. It would not be suitable, or happy, or proper at all for you, to marry a man so old as Mr. Iredell is. Look at the difference between you."

I had looked at the difference often, but it was not the difference of years.

"Mr. Iredell is not a young man any longer," Olive went on.

"He is not an old man," I could not help replying.

"Well, do you want to draw him into marrying you? For if you write such an answer to that letter as you meant to write, whether *he* meant it or no, that is what he will see you mean. If I answer it, it will be all right."

"What will you say? What different from what I should say?"

"It will not be you saying it; that is the difference. You will not be compromised, and Mr. Iredell will be free."

I could see Olive was eager and impatient. I did not perceive what business it was of her's at all, I must say; and yet, as she put it, I found it was very difficult for me to oppose her. How far she was right, I cannot tell. I have no means of knowing. My own judgment bade me do the simple thing, and write, as I had been written to. But Olive's judgment,—or her persuasions,—confused me, and confused my perceptions. I did not know

what to do, and could take no resolution with comfort and pleasure. More than all, I was confounded by the shame of Olive's suggestions. I was overwhelmed with shame; and the longer I waited, it became more and more impossible for me to follow what would have been my own judgment and wish. The right and the reasonable thing seemed to me to be, that I should myself answer simply and truly the letter that had come to myself; but I believe the very strength of my desire to do this scared me from doing it. That is, after Olive's suggestions. No such miserable thoughts had entered my brain before; now they paralysed me. I could not think clearly; I could only feel the burning of my face and the consuming shame which overcame me. Write? I could not write now. I *could* have sent the simplest and most innocent of answers; now, consciousness, if it was only consciousness of what Olive thought, had risen up to charge impossibility upon every free and natural word. I thought I saw what was the right thing to do; alas, the power to do it was no longer in me. Olive, of course, did not mean this. She was speaking from her point of view, which seems to me a very queer one. And again, I *do* not know how it concerned her. It was my business.

"Shall I write it?" Olive broke in upon my meditations, before they had lasted very long.

"I do not see how you can, properly, write for me."

"Because I am so much older, and know more

about things. Why, Desire, just recollect yourself; you are *far* too young to be the wife of such a man as Mr. Iredell. It would not be happy for either of you."

"I never thought of marrying him!" I flamed out. "And I am ashamed to have such a thing spoken of. You have no right to do it."

"There are times when things must be spoken of; or what is necessary cannot be done. This is one of the times. You do not want to marry a man so old as he is?—Desire, you do not wish such a thing, do you?" she added with an unbearable kind of smile.

"I do not want to marry anybody," I said hastily. "As little as anybody wants to marry me. You are making a great fiction out of your own fancy."

"I shall know what to say to Mr. Iredell," she rejoined, taking the letter gently from where it lay upon my lap; a point of pain, which had been such a point of pleasure!—"I will take care of your delicacy, and arrange the whole matter. Besides —as I said before,—I am not certain but the whole thing belongs to me in the first place. You rest quiet. Since you do not want to marry Mr. Iredell, you have no need to be anxious about the question. I will attend to it."

I wanted to ask her whether *she* did wish such a wish for herself; but I could not bring the words out. I saw her make off with the letter, which I am certain is my letter, and I had no power, for very confusion and shame, to say anything or take

my own part any more. Olive took the letter away, and I sat in my seat, left alone, like a person whose wits have forsaken him.

There followed a very long, miserable time, while I sat so. Order I could not bring into my thoughts; and the very disorder was miserable; nevertheless, there were one or two things which detached themselves from the whirl and stood more and more defined before me. With forms of pain, the more painful the more defined. I was not sure about the answer to the question Olive had last put me. Not sure about it; and the recognition of this fact brought over me a hot flood of shame and anxiety. Surely I had never even imagined the question, up to this time; when Olive put it, it took away my breath; but now that she had put it and was gone, the question remained and grew dreadful to look at. O why cannot people let things lie that ought to slumber! why should eyes be opened that do not want and have no need, for the present, to see? If such a question is to be started, the person to propound it is the person concerned. I do not see how any one else is authorized to be beforehand with him. All the same, once raised, there the question stands, and the thought, and you cannot forget it nor fail to see it; and the more you try not to look, the plainer you do see it. And I—oh I wish I could forget Olive's words! I wish she had never spoken them. I wish I had gone out into the woods to read my letter, and she had never known of it till afterward. But she herself

brought it in. And she will answer it,—my letter;—and dispose so, perhaps, of a question nobody but I should have the handling of. But then I am not clear that the subject is really touched at all in the letter; it is Olive only that has brought it up. All the same, it was brought up; and while I sat trying to forget it and put it away, my thoughts were giving a strange response to it; strange and unwarranted, and so not to be allowed or tolerated for a moment; only, I cannot cease to know that it was there. That was one point; clear and stinging with its painful pressure. The other was a simpler thing, but bad enough; Mr. Iredell's disappointment at the answer Olive will send; or rather, his disappointment that I have not cared enough about him to answer his letter.

This feeling grew so unbearable, that I half resolved I would recall my permission to Olive, and run all risks, rather than seem so unkind and ungrateful. But when I met Olive at dinner, that is, when she came down; for I had set the table and dished up what was to go upon it, and called her as I thought from her writing; I found to my dismay that she had not only finished the letter but despatched it. She had the red spots in her cheeks yet, and looked wonderfully handsome. I could eat no dinner, and she took notice of it, a little sharply.

Now, what will happen? I did not ask Olive what she had said. I could not. But I am wondering about it. If she has told Mr. Iredell to

come, as he proposed, and he comes, why he can certainly find out the truth for himself, all the truth he cares to know. If he does not come— But would she hinder him? would she *wish* to hinder him? I do not believe it. So what I have to do is to be quiet and wait. If I only were sure that I have done right! and I am nearly sure that I have done wrong. I sit at my window, and the day is as fair as ever; but the roses have lost their sweetness, and the smell of the honeysuckle sickens me.

July 1.

FOUR weeks of summer days have gone by since I wrote; and we have not heard again from Philadelphia. Olive seems quite quiet, and I think, expects nothing. I have been expecting all the month, and every day disappointed. Things are so beautiful here now. If Mr. Iredell were coming, I should like him to see Chesterfield in this dress. We should have so many good things to give him, too; things from the dairy and things from the garden. We have had a few fine strawberries. But I suppose at the Mansion there is a perfect wealth of strawberries—as of everything else.

I have walked through my duties this month with an absent mind. I am conscious of this; and I know it is not the right way to live. Where is

my trust? My life does not depend upon a letter, or on two letters; I know that. I know the Lord "will not withhold any good thing" from me. It does not follow that he may not withhold something that seems to me good, though he sees it differently. And I do not want to have things according to my own will, but according to his, who knows and cares. O I am glad to know he cares! The trouble that I carry in my heart alone, he knows it and all about it; and he can and will arrange things for me just in the way that on the whole is best. I know it; and yet, sometimes I do have very bitter trouble on account of that letter. The worst is, that that trouble is so confused and mixed up with other things of which I am ashamed to think, and indignant at myself that I should dare to think. I cannot help it. I can only pray and work and wait. Grandma says I do not read to her so much as I used; and she is right, and I am wrong. I will mend. "Life is, to do the will of God." And certainly, just now, my work is largely to take care of her and minister to her; while Olive attends more to the dairy and the house. I seem to suit grandma. So I will take up Lowth on Isaiah, or some other book, again. The fact that, for me, the taste is gone out of reading, is nothing to the purpose.

July 21.

OLIVE surprised me this afternoon with a proposition. We were busy in the kitchen, she getting dinner and I preserving raspberries; and just as I was finishing my job, she began.

"Desire, how would you like to go and pay Mrs. Bowdoin a visit?"

I almost started at this. When we were girls at school we were once or twice invited to spend a holiday with this lady; she is a sort of a cousin of my mother's; but we have not seen her in years, and I thought, never would again. Moreover, it is a very strange and unwonted thing for Olive to like me to go anywhere away from home. I never knew her do it before. I believe my first answer was to ask her to repeat what she had said.

"Mrs. Bowdoin wants you to come and make her a visit. She has written a very kind letter."

"To *you*, asking *me?*" said I.

"She wrote to me, yes, as the oldest. She would be glad of a visit from either of us, she says; but I don't care to visit Mrs. Bowdoin. I didn't know but you might be of a different mind."

"Whatever has put it into her head to ask us! I supposed she had forgotten our existence, as I had almost forgotten hers."

"Ungrateful of you," said Olive; "for her invitation is extremely kind. I think you had better accept it."

"When does she want us, or me?"

"Any time after the fifteenth of August."

I thought I would wait till that time, and if nothing else happened, I would perhaps go. I feel an unreasonable weariness of life's routine just now. Olive says I do not look well and need change. I cannot imagine why I should; but maybe a change will be good for me. I know what real change I want; and that is, to have my heart fuller of the love of Christ. No one loving him rightly could be such a lack-a-daisycal, spiritless thing as I have been lately. *He* said, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger." I have suffered from a kind of hunger, these weeks past, which surely a better knowledge of him would have stilled. I am not contented with myself. I will go to Mrs. Bowdoin's, I think; and try in a new place to get healthy again.

Aug. 20.

I LEFT home the 16th, not seeing any reason why I should put it off longer, and yet with a certain odd reluctance to go. That very fact however proves, I suppose, that it is good for me to go. Olive gave me some help in the preparation of my wardrobe, and even made over to me one of her new dresses, without which indeed it would have been rather difficult for me to present myself in Mrs. Bowdoin's well-appointed household. The journey was a humdrum affair, compared to my

other journey to Philadelphia. *That* was full of charm; everything was a matter of interest, nearly everything a subject of pleasure. So it ought to have been now; but so it was not. I might have been an old traveller, for my calm indifference to every turn and incident of the journey. However, the journey was tolerably free of incident; until the train rolled into Boston, and Mrs. Bowdoin's servant found me and informed me that the carriage was in waiting. How kind! I had a certain sensation of comfort immediately at that; and the sensation grew when I found myself and my bag packed into the well-stuffed chariot, and felt myself rolling smoothly away from the station; smoothly as only two horses and two servants can take a carriage. It gave me a curious feeling of seclusion; a certain dainty *set-by* and sheltered impression; and yet, sheltered from what? Perhaps it was the momentary lull from active business and a rush of incessant occupation; perhaps it was the luxurious leisure and permission to think. But I determined I would *not* think of what I ought to keep far from my thoughts; and I prayed for help. And then I began to consider what specially I was intended to do or to learn in this extraordinary holiday. Perhaps I can have opportunity for a good deal of learning, which I have so little chance for at home. But what possibly am I to *do?* Whom can I serve or help? I must watch and see.

Meanwhile the carriage rolled on; the streets of Boston were left behind; the country grew lovely.

It was a very warm day; the sunlight was mighty upon trees and meadows; but it did not oppress me. Rather I rejoiced in the impression of a rich and bountiful Nature; of ripening harvests and maturing fruit. I could see both by the way; yet the landscape was largely filled with grounds cultivated for pleasure merely. What a rich and bountiful growth of pleasure in these, too! With a sort of increasing content I watched and looked from the carriage window, and saw how many people have life easy. There is a great charm in it! Yes, such a carriage as that I was riding in, such gardens of flowers as those I saw glimmering here and there, through the evergreens of some plantation, fainting I should think just then under the August heat;—such mansions as shewed themselves frequently by the way;—these are pleasant things. The *ease* of life is a great charm, as I said. I will enjoy it while it is given me; but I am glad, glad, that I can trust my Lord to choose and arrange my own life portion; and the ease he does not choose to give me, I do not want. What is like the love of Christ? O happy, happy, that I am; having that, I can do without—other things.

So I had a sweet kind of a ride.

The carriage turned in at last from the high-road, into the grounds of Mrs. Bowdoin's place; and through pretty shrubbery and plantations we came to the door. There was Mrs. Bowdoin on the steps to give me a welcome, and herself opened the carriage door, in a kind of hurry to embrace me.

"Olive—Desire—which of you is it?" she said with the kindest smile; and then after kissing me holding me back to look in my face. "No, I see it is Desire. You dear child! I am so glad to have you. Milly, here, come and take Miss Burgoyne's bag—take it up to her room. Come in, dear, and let me look at you. Are you almost melted? Your train came at such a bad hour—you had to drive through the very heat of the day."

I assured my kind hostess that I had had a very pleasant drive and enjoyed it.

"Then you are good at enjoying!" she said with a slight laugh. "*Enjoy* a drive, in this temperature of everything! You are Desire completed. Sit down and rest, and let me look at you, before I let you go to your room. Take off your bonnet. Yes, it's Desire; I see that; but it *is* Desire completed," she added, with the laugh again. "You are not 'little Desire' now. My dear, what a beauty you are! Do you know it? Well, I am delighted to have you. I like beautiful things. Are you worn out? travelling at night?"

I found I had half forgotten Mrs. Bowdoin, or else *she* had changed. She is a most comfortable-looking person. I suppose she has been handsome in her day; she is well-looking now, with pretty hair and a pretty mouth, and a sweet, lively expression. There is the habit of the world in her manner, and the habit of ease too; for Mrs. Bowdoin has been rich all her life. It is an odd thing

that she should have bethought her to send for me; but there is no question of my welcome. I was presently taken up stairs and introduced to my room; a lovely, large room with three windows, full of all that can within the compass of a room make life pleasant; and then she kissed me and left me, after shewing me the drawers, presses and wardrobe at my disposal. My little belongings have much more room than they want. I arranged my hair and changed my dusty dress; put on a clean muslin, and went down. I knew the muslin was a little faded and did not quite suit Mrs. Bowdoin's drawing room; however, I made the best of it. And so must she. If it were cold weather, I should be all right; for I have my Philadelphia dresses yet.

Mrs. Bowdoin's house is delightful; I remember that from old times; but I never saw it then in warm weather. It is a large house; and all the doors and windows are standing open, as if to invite the summer to come in. And summer does come in; the sweet balmy air, the flutter of leaves, the singing of birds, the shine of the flowers, all seems to come in and pass through and come in again. From every window and open door one sees lovely things; trees, green grass, blossoming shrubs, trailing creepers. Not any distant view, from the lower windows at least; and really, one can do without it quite well; the grounds and the plantations are so luxuriant and rich in effect. The verandah on three sides is very wide, and furnished with cane

settees and Indian chairs; it is the loveliest of abiding-places. And then, inside, the house is all full of pretty things; full and flowing over; on the tables, on étagéres, on brackets, on the floor; for even on the marble floor of the hall and out on the verandah stand wonderful jars of old china, big and handsome and odd, fascinating to my eyes. Now, however, when I went down, I passed them by and met Mrs. Bowdoin in the dining-room; where an additional attraction stood, in the shape of a table covered with things fitted to please eye and taste both. Everything here is in this full and luxurious style. I don't doubt Mrs. Bowdoin's good eyes took the measure of my poor dimmed muslin dress, but she did not let me see that they did. She welcomed me with a most genial smile, and introduced me to a gentleman in the room with her, a Mr. Holland; and then we sat down to the daintiest cold meal I ever saw. Cold meats with jelly, salad, ices and fruits, and the most delicious bread and butter. I thought we had good bread at Chesterfield; but this is refined in comparison, light, tender and sweet, like the most delicate rolls. All this was in harmony; in such a house one would expect just such a table; the proportions of life here are exceedingly well suited to one another. There comes upon me in such circumstances a most agreeable sense of fitness, a soothed content of approbation, which is extremely satisfactory. I enjoyed it, mostly in silence, while my companions talked.

"Mr. Holland, how do you like my new purchase?"

"I beg your pardon,—your hand is so constantly open for such investments, — may I ask, to *what* purchase, lately made, you refer?"

Mrs. Bowdoin seemed amused.

"I mean the new piece of sculpture in the hall; the foundling."

"You must let me examine it further, before I venture to pronounce. Where did you get it?"

"O that part of the story I will keep till you have looked at it. I want your unbiassed opinion."

"I see, there is a story," said Mr. Holland. "I can guess what sort of one. Well, we will look at the piece after dinner. Is Miss Burgoyne fond of such things?"

His eyes put the question to me. He is a young man, and a very handsome one, and his eyes are fine and pleasant to meet. I answered that I also could tell better after a view of the "thing" in question.

"Both of you non-committal," said Mrs. Bowdoin.

"I will not be, after I have seen it," I said.

"I will try not to be," said Mr. Holland,

"You will *try* not to be non-committal!" echoed our hostess.

"Why not?"

"That answer betrays you. Well, I shall know what to think of your opinion."

We went out presently into the hall and were

bade to stand in front of a large mass of white marble at one end. Looked at more narrowly, this mass resolved itself into a huge square block or pedestal, upon which a figure was kneeling apparently taking up an infant from the ground, or laying one down. There was nothing more to be made of the figure. It said nothing to me; it was not graceful, it was not beautiful, it had no particular action or expression. Mr. Holland viewed it from the front, then went to one side and viewed it, then to the other side.

"Well," said Mrs. Bowdoin at last with a contained laugh, "what do you think?"

"I should like very much to hear the story," said Mr. Holland.

"Cannot you judge of the piece without knowing its history?"

"What is Miss Burgoyne's opinion?"

"I asked for yours, man!" said our hostess. "Come, out with it. Isn't she handsome?"

"You know she is not; but there is no reason why a peasant woman should be handsome. The question is, what else is she?"

"Yes; what else is she?" Mrs. Bowdoin repeated. "Can't you see?"

"I cannot see that she is anything."

"Desire!" said Mrs. Bowdoin. "What do you say?"

"I cannot understand what right she has to be here, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"Why not?"

"She is out of place. In fact, I do not see what right she has to be anywhere."

"What gives a piece of sculpture such a right?" Mr. Holland asked me now. "A right to be, anywhere, as you say?"

I hesitated. Finally I ventured.

"One must like to look at it. And it ought to do one good to look at it." Mr. Holland clapped his hands softly.

"Capital!" said he. "We have got an art critic here, Mrs. Bowdoin; did you know that?"

"I don't know what she is," said Mrs. Bowdoin. "I haven't seen her since she was a little girl. Desire, what fault do you find with my peasant woman? She might be 'Charity.'"

"Mrs. Bowdoin, she is clumsy. And that is *all* she is."

"What shall I do with her?"

"As she has no right to existence—" said Mr. Holland. "Why cannot you send her to the rooms of your Young Women's Christian Association? it might serve to break a bare corner, and give a little air of—less squareness, in short."

"You forget the moral effect."

"There is no *im*moral effect."

"No, but yes. What have the rooms of the Young Women's Christian Association to do with statuary?"

"I think I remarked, it might have the effect to take down the squareness. Why should not religion be adorned, and be elegant?"

"Come out here on the verandah, the shady side, and let us talk there. It is so hot!—Sit down, my dear; that is a comfortable chair. Rest yourself. Now, Mr. Holland, you may take that one, and go on, and tell us about the adornment of religion. I do not know what you are at."

"Well," said Mr. Holland, "I repeat my question. Why should not religion be adorned, and be elegant?"

"You think it isn't?"

"I think it is not, in those rooms!"

"Well, I'll tell you. We only get the money to light those rooms, and to warm them, by the hardest. What would be the effect of placing costly pieces of sculpture in the corners? People would say, why didn't Mrs. Bowdoin pay the rent? and that we have no business to buy sculpture till we can get some good lamps."

"I am not able to answer that," said Mr. Holland.

"You see, religion wants something else first, before adornment."

"It wants adornment too."

"Must live first."

"Are we to infer, then, that where religion shews most adornment, it has thriven to most life?"

"You'll get my head in a confusion again, as usual. No, I do not infer any such thing. What do you say, Desire?"

Mr. Holland's eyes came to me, curious, I knew, to hear what I would answer; or probably curious to know whether I could answer anything. I pre-

ferred to make my words as few as possible, and declared myself eager to listen.

"That won't do," said Mrs. Bowdoin, with a short laugh. "You must not back out and leave me alone, with Mr. Holland to fight. What do *you* think about the adornment of religion?"

"I think, as you say, Mrs. Bowdoin, it must live first."

"The question is," Mr. Holland rejoined, "whether more of the attractive in circumstances, would not help it to live?"

"Circumstances of art surroundings? pictures and statues?"

"And music; and grounds well laid out; and pleasant fittings and furnishings of rooms; and the like."

"I have never seen it. I don't know," I said. "I have never seen it tried. But it seems to me, so far as I know anything about it, that the times when religion had most power of attraction and power of every sort, were just those times when it was most bare of all outward recommendations."

My companions were both silent, and then Mrs. Bowdoin said with a sort of chuckle,

"That is true. What do you oppose to that, Mr. Holland?"

"I would like Miss Burgoyne to go on, and give us, if she can, the explanation; the philosophy."

"It is very simple," said I. "The power of religion is from God; and it stands to reason he would

most give the power when his servants obeyed his directions. And the directions said nothing about houses or pictures or statues; but only that they should go everywhere and tell everybody the good news."

Mr. Holland rubbed his forehead; I thought he did not like my explanation, yet what could he say to it.

"Then would you not, if a house,—a house for public Christian uses, was lighted and warmed, as Mrs. Bowdoin says,—would you not make it pleasant with paintings, or in other ways?"

"To make religion attractive? No," I said. "I would have it cheerful and comfortable—I would put hindrances out of the way—but I would not ornament it."

"But after all, why not, Desire?" Mrs. Bowdoin asked. "Those things are not forbidden."

"They are not commanded."

"Well, what then? Mustn't we do anything but what is commanded?"

"Ought we not to do that first?"

"Well, what do you mean? what is commanded?"

I thought I had said!

"I mean, Mrs. Bowdoin, the Lord has given us a charge to teach everybody and bring everybody into the kingdom. Now, till that is done, have we any right to take money wanted for that, and use it to buy pictures?"

"Or build great churches?" suggested Mr. Holland.

"Or build great churches. Till the Lord's temple is built, which he cares most about."

"You have thought about this," Mr. Holland remarked, with I thought a little surprise.

"Yes," I said, "a little. When I was in Philadelphia last fall I was obliged to think of it; and I heard it talked about. And what I have said just now is only what I have heard somebody else say; and I thought it was the truth."

My memory recalled, as I spoke the words, it recalled the talk I had had with Mr. Iredell, in which he had said all this and much more; and how I had listened, with inward acquiescence, though looking at a subject that was new to me. My fancy swept me away from Boston and from Mrs. Bowdoin's house, and from my companions, for a moment. I was thinking that Mr. Iredell was always right, in whatever he talked about; and often seemed to open my eyes, as if for the first time, to the sense of things. I came back to the present, hearing Mrs. Bowdoin's voice, as she said,

"You had a pleasant visit in Philadelphia, hadn't you?"

And I fancied something peculiar in her expression; but she went on immediately,—

"Mr. Holland, we must do our best to make her forget it."

The words were very kind; and I thought, if anything could do that impossible feat, it might be done here. The place and all about the place were so pleasant. As the sun fell lower, and shad-

ows took a longer and longer slant, the breeze began to blow in from the sea, gentle but refreshing. Lights were pretty and prettier on the tree tops, and between the trees bringing out a patch of flower colour here and there; and I sat in the easiest of Indian chairs, while my two companions fell into talk of a more light and various character, not degenerating ever into nonsense; and I listened, in full amusement and sympathy and quiet enjoyment. Both the talkers were characters to study, and agreeable subjects to watch. Mrs. Bowdoin knows all Boston, and a good deal of the rest of the world. Mr. Holland has not lived long enough to know so much of that sort of knowledge; but he is full of books and of thoughts, and has his own ways of looking at things, which makes one always interested in what he is saying and curious to hear what will come out next. One does not, of course, always agree with him; but his conversation always shews a finely gifted nature, and I think an honest one. He is very interesting; and Mrs. Bowdoin I can see thinks so too.

So there we sat talking, I listening rather, for a long time. I was just a little tired with my journey, and rested in a very sweet kind of lull; no duty just at the moment demanding me, and finding myself again where I so delight to be; in a world of mental activity and rich intellectual growth. What is like it? O what is like it! to feel one's mind let out of prison, as it were, or even over the mountains of Rasselas's Happy Val-

ley, and free to see and know what is in the world and what is in the universe, and to breathe fresh air and plenty of it. Not that it was like talking to Mr. Iredell, for there another element of enjoyment came in; and this was very different; but I was glad to have something divert my thoughts from him. Since that day in June I have, it seems to me, thought of nothing else; and my mind is tired. I am glad to forget. So I let myself go down the stream of talk, in a sort of little shallop of content, which carried me.

Then, when the evening began to fall, we went in to tea. I believe, if I am to confess the truth, that the sphere of mental life which suits me so well associates itself readily, if not necessarily, with the surroundings of what may be called a high degree of social refinement. It is part of that "ease of life," of which I was making mention; but it is also more. It is far more. The perfection of every appliance, the elegance of every arrangement, beauty and dainty fitness in everything the eye falls upon; how I delight in it! Now Mrs. Bowdoin's tea-table. The delicate old silver, in forms that are a study, so quaint and pretty; and these in perfect order of keeping. The cups of thin china; it is odd, but tea can never be so good out of a thick cup; and her cups are of dark chocolate colour, with a narrow rim of gold round the edge; bewitchingly pretty. Glass dishes for sweetmeats, and fruit, and sugar, various in form, but every one an adornment to the table, they are

so exquisitely cut and have such graceful outlines. Then of course damask white and fine; and flowers in the middle of the table; and a tea-caddy of Indian manufacture which it is a pleasure to see. All harmonizes, all fits; there is no flaw or failure anywhere. It would be something out of keeping, if the viands served upon these dishes were not also dainty and delicate. Bread, and fruit, and tea, and every thing else were of a quality that left nothing to wish for.

"I find, Miss Burgoyne," Mr. Holland said as he gave me butter from a beautiful butter-dish,—"I find, that Mrs. Bowdoin's tea-table is a work of high art."

"It isn't," said our hostess, with a smile however which spoke her well enough pleased,—"it is a work of pure nature."

"All the same," returned Mr. Holland; "art is natural to some people."

"But is it art then? What *is* art?"

"I was talking of fine art; and you know what that is, as well as anybody."

"And I think it is the naturalest thing in the world."

"Because it is the reflection of pure nature; when it is true."

"But for instance," said I. "What 'nature' is reflected by all these forms of porcelain and silver and glass upon the table? they are not like anything in the world."

Mrs. Bowdoin laughed, but Mr. Holland went

on with serious earnestness. "They are the reflection of the sense of beauty in the mind of man, which has perceived these lines and curves to be lovely. They are *copies* of nothing. They are the outcome of that feeling of the beauty of forms and colours, which to be sure, as Mrs. Bowdoin says, is natural with some people."

"Of course, the thing made testifies of the mental qualities of its maker," said I. "Of course, for it comes out from them. I remember what was once said to me; if that is true of men's works, it is also true of God's works; and so, as somebody has written, everything in nature is the expression of a thought of God. I have enjoyed things in nature much more since I heard that."

"Peaches?" said Mrs. Bowdoin smiling, as she put a magnificent one on my plate.

"Peaches? O yes! certainly," I said. "And strawberries; and everything else. Just look at this fruit, Mrs. Bowdoin; look at the exquisite red of one side and the clear mellow tint of the other; and think what it is inside, what a flagon of refreshment, just made to be delicious and refreshing; and then add that thought I quoted to you, and see how wonderful and how delicious the refreshment becomes."

"Desire," said Mrs. Bowdoin, seriously, I thought, —"you are a great deal better than I am."

"There is no goodness in the matter of my speech," said I smiling, wondering at myself that I should have spoken so much.

When I went up to my room and sat down by the open window, I thought of the subject again. For the loveliest moonlight was glistening on the tree leaves, and here and there laying a band of brightness upon the grass; the soft warm air came with a little freshness from the sea; and there was a still, lofty peace and purity upon all the world, which did indeed speak of the mind of its Creator. If the world could once get into harmony with that! as it is, the contrast is painful. But I sat and drank it in, the peace and the quiet and the purity. I at least can be in harmony with it; and then—I remembered that it is written,—

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee; because he trusteth in thee."

So I will trust my God. And I think I ought not to be uneasy about my letter, or Mr. Iredell, or anything else. I ought to trust absolutely. "Life is, to do the will of God." And Jesus said, "This is life eternal; to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Then to know him, and to know him better, must be my constant first aim. I went to sleep very peacefully.

Aug. 21.

THE very next day after my coming Mrs. Bowdoin said she was going to drive in to Boston; and asked me if I had a mind to go with her? I said yes.

"Have you any shopping to do? I have."

"No," I said.

"Don't you want *anything?* just to pass away the time?"

"Time will not hang heavy," I assured her.

"Where do you do your shopping in Chesterfield?"

"Sometimes we go over to Wormington, when we have a good chance. But our shopping is a small affair, Mrs. Bowdoin. In Chesterfield we do not want much."

"But you are not in Chesterfield," she said with a quick look and smile.

"No; and I know I am not dressed just as I ought to be in your house. Do you mind, Mrs. Bowdoin? If *you* do not mind, I will not. I could not help it. I would have provided myself better, if I could."

"Yes, I mind," she said, nodding her head and looking at me as if to see how I would take what she was going to say. "I mind so much, that I am going to put my fingers into the pie. You will let me, hey? See—I want you to take this little purse and spend what is in it. Get whatever you want. You dear child, I would do it myself, if I did not know you could fit yourself better than I could fit you; and then my sempstress shall work for you, whatever you like. She has nothing to do for me just now that has any hurry; so I will just make her over to you for a while."

Mrs. Bowdoin kissed me, who was too astonished

to say one word, either of thanks or remonstrance, and ran out of the room.

In the purse was a note for a hundred dollars.

I put on my bonnet in a dream, and only by degrees found my wits in the course of our drive in to the city. Mrs. Bowdoin talked of various things; I tried to reply, but I am sure I was a dull companion. Then just as we were entering the thoroughfares of the city, she turned to me.

"What first, Desire?"

The look was so merry and genial, I could do nothing but smile back and answer frankly,

"I have no proper summer dresses, Mrs. Bowdoin. Muslins."

"Can you make them?"

"O yes! nicely."

"I'll get you patterns. And muslins are easy to make. Well, muslins first, then. But if I were you I'd get a black grenadine. They wear for ever, and they always look nice."

I never had such a morning in my life, not even that day in Philadelphia when Caroline went shopping with me. We found everything I wanted, and I wanted a good many little things. My money held out though, for I was careful; but the carriage was loaded with parcels as we went from one store to another. At last we drove home, happy both of us, I think, over the day's work. For I was glad on Mrs. Bowdoin's account, as well as on my own; and she, who knows? perhaps she was too. However, the principal spring of her pleas-

ure was clear and unselfish. Nevertheless, I perfectly understand that my faded dresses do not harmonize with all the rest of Mrs. Bowdoin's dainty surroundings. I quite well comprehend that they may be a sort of annoyance to her taste and her pride too; and so, if I had had any scruple on any other score about accepting her gifts, this consideration would have made it seem to me a duty. I should be very nice now, I knew, in a few days.

I went to work the next morning, cutting out and arranging; and since then I have been as busy as possible with needle and scissors. One dress I finished yesterday and wore it down to dinner. Mrs. Bowdoin looked very much pleased; praised my skill, praised my taste, admired my despatch, and—admired me! I am glad she does. She is so wedded to pretty things, that I fancy she can hardly take full satisfaction in anybody's company whose exterior is not agreeable to her. Mr. Holland, half laughing, uttered a thought very like my own, when she was pouring out her praises and calling upon him to second them.

"You may be glad, Miss Burgoyne," he said, "that Mrs. Bowdoin finds such complacency in you. Apart from the fact, which I suppose no woman despises, and every woman knows, who possesses personal advantages, Mrs. Bowdoin can hardly love what she does not find beautiful."

Our hostess laughed. "Spoiled, am I not?" she said. "Well, it is true. I don't like ugly things."

"Or people."

"Well, yes. I don't like ugly people. Why should I? Is not the love of beauty natural and unavoidable?"

"May be cultivated too," said Mr. Holland.

"Yes, I *have* cultivated it. My house is full of pretty things. I like to find them wherever my eye falls."

"I wonder you keep those big jars about, then."

"Jars? Those Indian jars? Much you know about it! Why those are *very* beautiful. They are worth a small fortune."

"Want of cultivation on my part," said Mr. Holland drily.

"But do I carry it too far?—cultivation, I mean; not the want of it. Can one help liking handsome people? Is not beauty always the symbol of goodness?"

"The symbol and the thing get badly separated, said Mr. Holland.

"Well, but,—it remains the symbol still. And ugliness belongs to sin. I believe I hate it like sin," she added laughing.

"I am sure you do," said Mr. Holland.

"Well, is that not right? It has come through sin, and because of sin. What do you think, Desire?"

"I was thinking." said I, "that Christ touched the leper."

"So he did," said Mrs. Bowdoin gravely; "and it is just a wonder to me. You never saw a leper,

Desire; a Syrian leper; and I have. I could not do it."

"To save him, you could."

"I don't know that. I don't believe I could."

"But then comes this fact, Mrs. Bowdoin. To save him, or to save many another with equal spiritual deformity, you *must* touch him. You cannot do it else."

"Why not?" she said shortly.

"Miss Burgoyne is right," said Mr. Holland bowing.

"What do you mean? Speak you, Desire!"

"To reach a great many people, you must love them first, Mrs. Bowdoin. You know, if you love, you will not mind touching. And the touch is a token of the feeling."

"That is horrid doctrine!" said our hostess, looking at me with half serious remonstrance. "I tell you, I have an absolute horror of what is unclean and unlovely. Am I to do force to that?"

There swept upon me such a sense of the contrast, between even this kind woman's tenderness, and the love that came not to seek the lovely but the defiled, that I had to turn my face away. I felt my eyes suddenly filling.

"But, Desire," said Mrs. Bowdoin half laughing, "don't turn off; don't give me up. There are people enough to go after the ugly ones; may not I be allowed to indulge myself in the company of what does not shock me? There are others who would not feel the shock."

"I think we ought to be as much like Christ as we can," I answered unwillingly; but I had to answer. Mr. Holland did not give me any help. And now he repeated,

"As much as we *can*. Is there not an admission there of all Mrs. Bowdoin claims?"

I was silent.

"How much *can* we?" he urged.

I was surprised at his question, for Mr. Holland is a clergyman; not just now doing the work of one, indeed, because he has been and is still out of health. I answered him with words about which I thought there could be no mistake.

"'Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.'"

"Whom he *foreknew*—O there you are in the decrees!" cried Mrs. Bowdoin.

"What decree?" said I. "There is only one that I see here; and that is, that those who believe in Christ shall be made in his likeness again; made *like him*. 'Renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.'"

"Why, Desire, how you know Scripture!" Mrs. Bowdoin exclaimed; but I looked for Mr. Holland's answer.

"Then you think," said he slowly,—"*do* you think, that we can in the flesh bear that image? speaking without a figure."

"*He* said, Mr. Holland, the Lord himself set the standard—'that ye love one another, *even as I have loved you.*'"

"But, Desire, that is impossible," cried our hostess. "Set too high a standard, and no one will try to reach it."

"Set too low a one,—and how then?" said Mr Holland, rubbing his forehead.

"It is not I that set the standard, in any case," I remarked. "I am only reminding you"

"If we were to take those words just as they stand, they would make you a terrible preacher," said Mrs. Bowdoin; "but I do not think it. Humanity might despair at once."

And to me it seemed that just there was Humanity's spring of hope!

After dinner we were again sitting upon the verandah, and Mr. Holland was reading aloud to us; when one of the servants came with an announcement. Mrs. Bowdoin stopped the reading to hear it, got up and went into the hall, and the next minute called me. I followed her. There she stood in the centre of the hall, with a beaming face, and in her hand was a Leghorn flat.

"Here!" she cried, "let me try it on you, to see if it is right. Stoop your head, Desire." (For though I am not tall, I am taller than she.) "How does that feel? comfortable? Look in the glass and see how you like yourself."

Why should I? I thought; but I did as she bade me. I saw my figure in the tall mirror, my new muslin, crowned with this gypsey hat; the brim of which was so broad that it could not be stiff. and so fine and delicate that its waving could

not be anything but graceful. It was very simply trimmed, and to be sure, as I saw, very becoming.

"There!" cried my hostess,—"how do you like it? Is it charming, or otherwise? My dear, if I am to love beauty I must love you. You are simply lovely! and lovely simple! You might be an Arcadian shepherdess; or you might be an English countess. You are rather English in your style. But that hat fits you. Mr. Holland!—"

He came in.

"How do you like that? Is my taste good?"

"Perfect!" he said, with such an accent that she laughed, and I believe I reddened. It began to dawn on me that Mrs. Bowdoin had set the hat on the head it was meant for. Could it be possible! My eyes went to her face, in blank wonder and questioning.

"Yes," she said laughing,—"you need not look at me so. Mr. Holland will tell you I have a reputation for understanding in dress; far more than in theology. Desire, I was not going to have you spoil your pretty new dresses with a bonnet out of keeping. My dear, lay it to the charge of my love of beauty, about which Mr. Holland was discoursing to you lately."

Sep 10.

TWENTY days since I last wrote. My visit draws out into unforeseen length, but it seems all the world will have it so. Olive writes that I may content myself; I am not needed at home. I read and wonder; for she was never willing to have me away before. But I have grown older, and she perhaps knows that it is good for me to see a little more of the world And it *is* good for me. I feel it. I am gaining a stronger, healthier condition of mind. The days are filled with pleasant things, and I find pleasure a very good alterative. I am sober enough yet; soberer than is good, I think; for I think one ought to be so full of the love of Christ and of joy in his presence, that it should be foundation enough to rest on, and so everything else in the world that is good be enjoyed with a free, ready mind. I have been out of enjoyment ever since that letter last June. Now I think I am slowly regaining tone. Surely, to any one of Christ's people, sunlight ought to be bright and flowers ought to be sweet; he made them and meant them to be so; and when the taste to discern the sweetness is not present, there must be some morbidness of condition or some failure of vitality.

I have been very busy, these days. I gave of necessity a good deal of time to my dress-making. Then I got hold of books in the library that I

wanted to see. I could bring them to my room; and how I have revelled! Layard's "Nineveh" was one of the books; another was Thompson's "Land and the Book"; another, Macaulay's "History of England." Down stairs I have read a good deal aloud to Mrs. Bowdoin; she found out that I could read, and since then I have had plenty of occupation when with her. That reading is mostly desultory, and in it Mr. Holland takes turns with me. It is not *light* reading, very often; for we go over articles in the magazines, foreign ones generally, upon scientific or political or literary subjects; and we stop to discuss things; and nothing can be thought of more enjoyable. In this kind, I mean. Mrs. Bowdoin takes great delight in both the reading and the talk; likes to hear Mr. Holland and me especially, when we differ on some point, or when together we are seeking to get at the truth of something. She is more fond of listening to us than of talking much herself; and she lies back in her easy chair, with a smile on her face and her bright eyes going from one of us to the other, putting in a word here and there. She vows she will not hear of my returning home; it is not to be spoken of. I am sure I am content. I believe it is right for me to take this experience while I can.

One night we went in to Boston to attend a concert. That was a wonderful night for me. I never knew until then what music can be, and do, except only my experience that night in Philadelphia; and I think some of the music then was bet-

ter than any we had here; but I am very thankful to have had this.

In the afternoon of the next day we were sitting in the verandah, and Mr. Holland began to tell us about a famous actor whom he had learned to know abroad. For Mr. Holland has been in Europe. He went for his health. Mrs. Bowdoin was interested to hear of this man; and Mr. Holland told us how he had met him, at a watering place; what a genial, bright, warm-hearted, brilliant, witty companion he was, and how fast the companion grew into a friend. Mrs. Bowdoin asked all sorts of questions. So she heard of his varied literary knowledge; his general acquaintance with books and men; the lightning speed with which, in the midst of talk or discussion, he would introduce some life representation of the look or manner of somebody, with exquisite power of mimicry, inimitable grace and fun. Suddenly Mr. Holland turned to me.

"Have you ever been to the theatre?"

"Never," said I. "Though—I was once in a sort of theatre; opera, I suppose you would call it; for part of an evening."

"Was it good?"

"No."

"You cannot judge of the stage without seeing a good representation."

"This was clever enough," said I; "if you mean that."

Both asked in a breath, "What was it?" and I was ashamed to tell them. I would not tell them.

"Don't judge of the stage by that instance," said Mr. Holland.

"How can I help it?"

"Because it would not be true judgment. I regard the stage as an important cultivating instrumentality. There is great power for good in it; very great. It is a mighty instrument."

"And for evil."

"It may be, of course. Most things that have the one side have the other."

"Which side comes out most frequently, Mrs. Bowdoin?"

Mrs. Bowdoin laughed a little, a laugh not quite unconstrained; and instead of answering, avowed that she was very fond of a good theatrical performance. She would not go to any but a good one.

I was silent; it was not my part to preach to her; but I recollected things Mr. Iredell had said that evening during our walk home.

"What do *you* know about it?" she inquired, at last, with laughing curiosity.

"I can fancy how fascinating it can be, by the way I was interested at first. But that power of fascination makes it terrible, if it is not good."

"Why should it not be good?"

"I have heard—because theatres cannot live and be good."

"O but! That is just because good people enough will not go to them," cried Mr. Holland. "That leaves them to the bad"

"Theatres are not a new thing," I replied. "If it is true, that good people do not go to them, that shews, does it not, that they have found reason not to go?"

"Prejudice—" said Mr. Holland. "And ignorance. I went, when I was in Europe; I saw this man of whom I have been telling you. There was no harm in the representation, but much good; for it was a capital representation of a historical character; a magnificent giving of a bit of historical portraiture."

"If it were all like that—" I said.

"It is not all like that," said Mrs. Bowdoin. "And do you know, Julius, you being a minister as you are, I would as lieve you had not gone."

"Mrs. Bowdoin!" exclaimed the young man. "*You* to be so narrow! Why should not a man who is a minister do anything that it is fit other men should do?"

"That is a little bit begging the question."

"I don't know how a man is to know then, what to do."

"Doesn't the Bible give the rule?" I ventured. "'Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.'"

I thought both my companions were uncomfortable at this. Both were silent. And then Mr. Holland asked me whether, acting on that principle, a man could not go to the theatre to see a good representation of a good play?

"There's the example—" said Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Example of no harm!" said the young man hastily.

"Begging the question again, Julius. What is no harm to *you*, may be, or lead to, great harm to somebody else."

"But every man must judge for himself. Am I to be the slave of another man's conscience?"

"No," said I; "but if meat made his brother to stumble, Paul was willing to eat no meat to the end of the world."

"There is another question. Is it not possible to do more harm to religion on one side by too great strictness, than on the other by a little amenity of thinking and acting? Is there not danger of making religion disagreeable, instead of attractive?"

"I should say, great danger," returned Mrs. Bowdoin. "I have seen people do it, lots of times."

"One would not put any unnecessary difficulty in people's way," I remarked.

"They do it," repeated Mrs. Bowdoin.

"But Christ said, the world would not like his servants," I went on.

There was again a pause. Both my companions were interested and even excited, and both I think were honest, but neither of them liking the conclusions towards which the talk trended.

"I don't know about that," Mrs. Bowdoin began. "Perhaps that belonged to past times. I think, as things are now, nobody is liked the worse for being a Christian."

"Decidedly not!" said Mr. Holland. "The other way, I should say."

If it had not been that I had heard Mr. Iredell go over this ground, I should not have dared to put in my weak voice against these two who knew of many things so much more than I. As it was, however, I dared not be silent.

"What becomes of the Lord's words, then?" I asked.

"Which ones?" Mrs. Bowdoin said hastily.

"'Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'"

Mrs. Bowdoin laughed a little, like a person somewhat amused at herself for being in a dilemma, and turned to Mr. Holland.

"What do you say? Facts seem to be against that. How do you answer, Julius?"

"I should like to hear Miss Burgoyne answer. The difficulty is for her to remove—if she can."

"Is it not plain?" said I. "The words of Christ must be true words. Does it not follow, that if the world, in spite of professions, *does* love anybody,—does it not follow that in reality he is 'of the world?' 'If any man *will live godly* in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.'"

And there they both flamed out, and declared that persecution was over; everybody thought as

he liked now, and did as he liked, and no one found fault.

"*Except*—just what you are finding fault with now; 'doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' Do you think the world likes that?"

"But we must consider other people," said Mr. Holland. "We must make our profession acceptable, by every means in our power. We must give no offence that we can help. 'Christ pleased not himself,' we are told."

"But he compromised nothing."

"No—he compromised nothing," Mr. Holland repeated slowly.

"Does not the world-power make the same demand that it did in the days of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image? that we should bow down and confess its supremacy? And if we yield, then we compromise our religion and dishonour God—even although we have done nothing but bow down; and *that* to the sound of music."

"Come! stop controversy, you two," said Mrs. Bowdoin laughing. "You will never convince each other. And you, Desire, tell me how come you to be so ready in argument? What do you know of the world?"

"Not much, Mrs. Bowdoin," I answered, glad to stop arguing.

"Where did you learn all that you have been saying?"

"I am glad you ask, for it was not original with me. I have heard this ground all talked over."

"Where?"

"In Philadelphia—when I was staying with Caroline."

"And are these Caroline's views?"

"Caroline's!—O no."

"She takes the other side then?"

"I never heard her talk directly on the subject."

"You have heard somebody else, who had studied it well?"

"I suppose so," I said, not wishing to go any further on *this* trail.

"Who was it, Desire?"

"I was thinking of what I once heard a Mr. Iredell say," I replied unwillingly; but I could see no way out but to answer.

"Iredell? Maximilian Iredell?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"Why of course I know him! Why shouldn't I know him? I know half Philadelphia. Isn't he a magnificent man? Maximilian Iredell! I must take care how I talk against him."

"In what way is he magnificent?" Mr. Holland asked.

"Every way! He's a splendid man. Grand physique, in the first place; magnificent development of strength and symmetry, in his frame and in his face; material and spiritual. I do not know such a *strong* man, every way, as Max Iredell. I should take care how I opposed him in an argument; but we take it safely, his opposition, transmitted through Desire."

"Mr. Holland will look upon me as a sort of lightning conductor, if you do not explain, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"I do not mean that."

"In what way would his opposition be so terrible then, if met directly?" asked Mr. Holland.

"You must know the man, to understand. He is the embodiment of truth, and honour, and purity. What Max Iredell does not approve, you feel instinctively, you ought not to approve. Didn't you like him, Desire?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"That's too faint an acknowledgment of his merits. But you have remembered his arguments,—I will say that for you."

"What *is* he? what has he done, or is he doing, in the world?" Mr. Holland went on.

"He is of a good family in Philadelphia, for your first question; as to the second, I don't know. He don't tell. He is a man of property; plenty of means; and I believe it is literally true of him, as it was of his Master, that he 'goes about doing good.' I know one or two instances, which have given me a key."

"How old?"

"He? O young enough yet. Over thirty, though don't you think so, Desire?"

I assented.

"And, to go back to our subject of a little while ago,—does the world dislike this gentleman?"

"He don't have much to do with it. Where did you see him, Desire?"

"I saw him at a garden party."

"Did you! He does not very often go to such entertainments. But he is a traveller, and a scholar, and he has enough to do with his time. There is a certain poor street in Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could tell you sundry things about Max Iredell; and there is a prison I know, where he has a regular Bible class, and the people worship him."

"I should think they would," said I. "There are so few that ever trouble themselves about prisoners in a jail."

"Did you happen to see Ernestine Forella, when you were in Philadelphia?"

I said yes.

"She is a character, isn't she? I expect her here by and by."

"*Here*, Mrs. Bowdoin?"

"Yes. Why? Will you be glad to see her?"

I hesitated, and Mrs. Bowdoin laughed.

"She's funny; but she is better than she seems. There is real good in her. She amuses me. Mr. Holland don't like her. Take care of your heart, Mr. Holland, when she comes! She knows how to catch it, if you are not careful; and when she has caught it, she understands how to play with it."

"I had best be armed beforehand," said Mr. Holland, with a look at me which I did not understand and which yet made me uneasy.

Sep. 30.

I AM still here, and odd enough it is. Olive rather urges me to stay; says it is doing me good, and that I am not wanted at home. Mrs. Bowdoin says I am doing *her* good, and that I *am* wanted here. For myself, I know it is well for me to be where I am. I am reading much; I am in the way of hearing a good deal of good talk; not from my two immediate companions merely, for now we begin to have frequent visits, especially from gentlemen, and there is a great deal said and discussed which it is useful to listen to. I am enjoying all this, and I think getting rested. I did not know I needed rest; but it feels so good and works such a change in me, I am inclined to believe the need must have been there. At any rate, I am so at home in my present circumstances that I seem to have lived in them always. I cannot be the same person with the Desire Burgoyne who was a while ago cooking grandmother's meals and helping her to bed. One thing I do not understand; how it is that Olive gets on so well without me, and likes to do it. She used to be of another mind.

Mr. Holland has begun to teach me German. He proposed the plan, and it was too pleasant to refuse. So we sit on the piazza, for the weather is deliciously warm still, and he tells me the names of things and I repeat them after him; and I learn genders and declensions at the same time. Mrs. Bowdoin sits by and laughs, and occasionally in-

terrupts the lesson entirely to talk of something more interesting to her. Truly Mr. Holland himself not infrequently does that, especially when Mrs. Bowdoin is not by. And then we talk and talk, till I sometimes get into a maze. Privately, I think *he* does that very often. It is surprising to me that a man of so much sense can dwell amid so general mystification of his thoughts; when there is sunshine and clear air for him.

The other night we were sitting upon the verandah; not alone, but as good as alone; for Mrs. Bowdoin was engaged in conversation with a gentleman on business, and a little removed from us. The night was very bright, and Mr. Holland asked me what I thought of the stars?

I replied, that of course I thought, as we knew, that they are worlds rolling in space.

"Do you think they are inhabited?"

"Considering that this earth which we live upon is full of life, filled inconceivably with all sorts of forms of it,—I cannot imagine for a moment that whole worlds, and myriads of them, are waste and tenantless."

"You do not think they were created just to give light upon the earth?"

"Is there any other instance that we know, where God's work answers only one purpose?"

Mr. Holland was silent.

"Most of his works serve a multiplicity of purposes. The other day, looking from my window, I noticed how an edge of shadow in the distance was

broken and beautiful by reason of the heads of trees along its line; and then I began to think of the uses one individual tree serves. Just reckon them over. There is nesting place for the birds, and shelter for the cattle; there is food for quantities of creatures that live upon it; you may see a woodpecker or a nut hatch going up and down and around the stem picking out its breakfast from under the bark, and sparrows and warblers gathering other insects from the leaves and twigs, which in their turn find what they want in the leaves or the wood. There is timber, and firewood, for man's uses; perhaps nuts also for his pleasure; there is the quota of work done upon the atmosphere, with which every individual leaf is charged. There is beauty for our eyes; and after all that, its round head breaks a line of shadow for an eye a mile off?"

"You ought to be a painter," said Mr. Holland smiling. "That is really very beautiful."

"Is it not?"

"And you are convinced by the argument from analogy? respecting the stars, I mean."

"Don't you think it is strong?"

"I do. Then, if you believe the stars to be peopled worlds, what sort of inhabitants do you assign to them?"

Here I laughed out. "Why, Mr. Holland, I have not the least data whereby to form a judgment. I know nothing about it."

"Are you satisfied with such uncertainty?"

"What signifies whether I am satisfied with it or not? I cannot remove it. Nor can you."

"I cannot prove anything," Mr. Holland admitted. "But would not a plausible theory commend itself to your acceptance?"

"No," said I.

"Why not?"

"There is no comfort in a theory."

"I don't know about that. Now for instance, if those shining specks are organized worlds, they must, you will grant me, be worth seeing nearer by."

"I suppose they must."

"Reasoning from analogy, they must. You and I would like to see them, would we not, after we have left this world?"

"Well?" said I.

"You will grant so much?"

"Yes, I may grant that. I suppose we shall take great delight then in investigating all the works of God, that we cannot reach now."

"Then that is settled. After we have done with this world, we would delight to visit those others. Is it conceivable that such a pleasure would be withholden from us? It is not conceivable to me. Therefore I believe that our spirits will be great travellers, and go from sphere to sphere, probably making long stays, and receiving a multitude of new experiences most delightful to think of."

Is it not strange, what nonsense sensible men

can talk? But in that shape I could not make my thoughts known.

"Staying a long while at each stopping place," I began, looking up at the stars, which I thought seemed to laugh down at us in their quiet way,— "it would take a small eternity to go over them all."

"Certainly it would! That is what I think."

"But, Mr. Holland," said I, "that would not be the Christian's heaven?"

"Why not? To admire the Creator's works is one of a Christian's joys."

"Yes, and that he will do, and does. But it is not the Christian's heaven, for all that."

"What is, then?"

"O Mr. Holland, do you ask?"

"Yes, I do," said he. "I want to hear your thought."

"But it is not *my thought;* it is the Lord's promise."

"Well, it is your thought about his promise."

"No, it is not. What a poor thing that would be! Do you think the Lord's promises are so uncertain that they may be understood all sorts of ways?"

"I do not know what promise you are referring to at this moment."

"This one. 'I will receive you unto myself; that *where I am, ye may be* also.'"

Mr. Holland was silent a while, and then he asked in a tone that surprised me,—

"And does that satisfy you?"

"Satisfy my wishes, do you mean?"

"Yes. Your notion of the happiness of heaven?"

"Fully. Perfectly. Utterly. What more could I want, if I were *with him?*"

"But,—you are with him now."

"I don't see his face. And I see only a little of his glory. It is rather, that he is with his people now; by and by they shall be with him!"

"You speak as if you would like the day to come?" said Mr. Holland, half wonderingly.

"I shall be very glad when it comes."

"I do not understand it," said he, lowering his voice and coming a little nearer. "I do not see how you can feel so. You have something that I have not. What is it?"

"I do not know, Mr. Holland," I said with my heart full. "If you are right, it must be the knowledge of Christ that you want."

"The knowledge? I thought I had that."

"Personal knowledge, I mean. Such knowledge as friends have of each other. Real intimate relations of mind to mind and spirit to spirit. You cannot love what you do not know. Hearsay will not do."

Just then, just at the right time, I thought, Mrs. Bowdoin's business friend went away and our talk was broken in upon. But I was very sorry for Mr. Holland! Is *that* all that his religion is to him? does he know no more? and yet he is a minister, and pretends to stand up in the pulpit and tell

other people how to find the way to God. The way he does not know himself!

When I went up to my room I opened my Bible, and revelled in some of the words I looked out. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine;' I understand what that means. And then, "I have *called thee by thy name;* thou art mine." Can anything be more sweet? And, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and *we will come unto him* and make our abode with him." I quoted those words to Mr. Holland, and he confessed he did not understand them. I am very sorry for him.

Oct. 20.

MY visit is two months long, and more. I could get uneasy about it, if it were not that Olive always writes that she does not want me, and Mrs. Bowdoin as persistently declares she cannot do without me. Both are so evidently in earnest that my conscience is quiet. As to the rest, it is a good thing for me. All the days of this beautiful month have been full of stirring mental activity, reading and talking and thinking. Outwardly, they have passed with a noiseless footfall.

The days will not be quite so noiseless now, I fancy; for Miss Forella is here. She came yesterday afternoon. We were on the piazza, for the day was extremely mild still, and I saw her alight

from the carriage. She was nicely dressed for travelling, with a most jaunty little hat upon her curly head; coquettish enough; and yet one that could not be objected to. Can she help being coquettish, when everything sits upon her with such an air? It is her nature, I think; it is hardly art or design. Her eye fell on me first, as she tripped up the steps; then passed to Mr. Holland, to whom she gave a nod, and came back to me.

"Why are you here!" she exclaimed icily. "You are ubiquitous." And she passed on to embrace Mrs. Bowdoin who stood in the doorway, and disappeared with her into the house. Mr. Holland and I remained with our thoughts. After a while he looked up.

"I have been watching," said he, "for a burst of wrath or indignation; and I don't see the signs of it. Not even so much as a flush on your cheeks Are you a saint?"

"Easy canonization," said I, "if that were all!"

"Easy? I don't know. I think impertinence, by your favour! harder to bear than downright injury."

"I suppose it would, from some people. And yet, I do not know. A person who *can* be impertinent, cannot be worth regarding."

"Is that philosophy?" said he. "Or is it, as I said, the saintly condition?"

"What do you mean by a saint?"

"Something belonging to the skies, not translated yet."

"Well," said I smiling, "that will do. But by belonging to the skies' do you mean, *not* belonging to the earth?"

"The one thing implies the other."

"Excuse me. No, I think not."

"How then?" said he. "People are not commonly denominated saints until they have left the world."

"Now-a-days."

"Was it ever otherwise? When?"

"Why, Mr. Holland," said I looking up at him, "all the Lord's people are 'called to be saints' at once; and they used not to be afraid of the name in New Testament times."

"Saint means a holy person."

"Yes. Just that."

"And that is something more than merely being *good*, or religious."

"Much more."

"How much more, then, if it is to be applicable to human beings in literal earnest?"

"Why, all that it would mean applied in any direction."

"What do you mean then by 'holy'?"

"I have heard it said, Mr. Holland, the word has first the meaning of 'set apart for God'; from that follows naturally, the other meaning, of the absolute purity anything so set apart must have."

"You would not attribute absolute purity to anything merely human?"

"The Bible calls the Lord's people holy, and bids them be holy, and promises them holiness."

"Hereafter."

"Yes, and here also. 'Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.'"

"Exactly!" cried Mr. Holland. "Before he comes to that vision he will be freed from defilement, undoubtedly, but not in *this* world."

"Where do you find that stated?"

"It follows from the necessity of the case," said Mr. Holland. "Human nature is defiled."

"Yes, but, 'He shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.'"

"Do you take that literally?" he exclaimed.

"By what right can you take it figuratively?"

"As I said, the necessity of the case."

"You just think it is too good to be true," said I laughing; "and so, you fancy the King's promise is too royal to be kept! But study the Bible, Mr. Holland; you will find the promise repeated and repeated, all over, in various forms."

"I am not sure," Mr. Holland said slowly after me, "I am not sure that I am thinking the promise *too good* to be true. I am afraid, I shrink, rather, before its demands. For if there be such a possibility, the possibility transforms itself immediately into imperative duty."

"Of course. And are you not glad it does?"

"No," said he in the same slow thoughtful way. "It terrifies me."

I was very sorry for him now, in proportion to

my respect for his honesty. How can so candid a mind be so confused in the mists of speculation? I have often marvelled at it. The fact must be, I think, that he studies other things more than the Bible. And then, does his just made confession give another key? He is not ready to face the consequences of accepting the truth?

We both remained silent after that word of his, to which I could find nothing to answer; and the verandah was very still for a while, till Mrs. Bowdoin and her new guest came out again. The latter had changed her dress. She wore now a polonaise of light camelshair, trimmed with scarlet and black embroidery and with red and black bows of ribband. Under the camelshair was a skirt of heavy black silk. I could not but admire her costume, it was very tasteful and very becoming. She swept over to Mr. Holland and asked him what he was doing? He told her, he had had a good deal of thinking lately to attend to.

"You think too much," said she.

"I often say that to myself," remarked our hostess.

"Mrs. Bowdoin," the new-comer went on, "do you let these young people make themselves gloomy with thinking?"

"You shall brighten us up, Ernestine."

"That depends upon how far things have gone. Tell me first, Mr. Holland—have you lost your heart to Miss Burgoyne?"

The easy, gentle assurance of the girl it is hard to describe. Her pretty lips took a line as playful

and innocent as if she had been asking any simple question; but the black eyes shot a dangerous ray. I felt a sudden anxiety as to what Mr. Holland would answer. But I found he was equal to the occasion, for with the most consummate coolness he replied,

"Miss Burgoyne kindly engaged to take care of it till you came."

The girl gave a queer little inarticulate sound, and surveyed him for a minute.

"What has Miss Burgoyne done to you, while she has been taking care of you?"

"I am sure, she has done me nothing but good."

"Do you expect me to go on with the treatment?" she said, keeping her eye fixed upon him, half observant, half mocking, quite witchful.

"I should expect some difference of handling."

"You'd be glad of it by this time, wouldn't you? Don't you think one gets awfully tired of having people do one good?"

"That has not been precisely my experience."

"It has mine," she said laughing. "I get desperate, by the time I have had enough of it, and then I fly out worse than ever and astonish people. I like to astonish people! It does me good. I feel soothed then, and ready to begin again."

"Begin what?" said Mrs. Bowdoin, who was laughing at her, well pleased; and indeed how could one but be pleased with such a pretty creature? The eyes, bright and soft, were wide awake;

the mouth with its pretty curves all alive with play; one could see indeed that she meant a good deal of what she said, yet one did not take it ill of her. She, knew, I think, her advantage, and went on.

"You know, dear Mrs. Bowdoin, nobody is wholly bad. I have my times of trying to behave myself."

"I hope, now is going to be one of the times."

"I don't know. With two such good people as Miss Burgoyne and Mr. Holland, I should think you must want a little variety. Imagine a salad all oil! I think I see you, so thankful for a little vinegar, and a dash of red pepper!".

Mr. Holland smiled, and passed his hand over his face as if to smooth the smile away.

"Isn't it true, Mr. Holland, that good people are tiresome?"

"Sometimes."

"They must be, you know, in the nature of the case. Even, quiet, steady,—no ups and downs nor crooks and turns; and if you like to travel a straight road that never turns and that you know never will turn, *I* don't! I like surprises, and changes, and new views, and windings that give one something new."

"How if the windings give you something you do not like?" I ventured.

"Anything is better than no change."

"You do not think so, Ernestine," our hostess put in.

"I do, indeed, Mrs. Bowdoin. I am speaking the perfect truth."

"There is a good deal of truth in it," remarked Mr. Holland, again repeating his former gesture. I suppose he was relishing the vinegar, and not wishing to shew how much.

"But people do not necessarily become monotonous and lose their individuality, when they become good," said I.

"Do you know an instance where they haven't?" said Miss Forella.

"Yes."

"O so do I," cried Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Who?"

Now I had an immediate suspicion that *she* knew, and wanted to bring out, the name on my lips. I was silent; but Mrs. Bowdoin spoke it.

"Maximilian Iredell."

"Did you know him before he was good."

"No."

"Then you cannot judge!"

"But, Ernestine, that will not do. He *is* an instance. He is not monotonous; he is not stupid; he is not dull."

"He is tiresome," said the girl. "He tires me to death. I would give anything in the world to make him angry!"

"I should think you might succeed," said I involuntarily.

"If I were a carman in the street abusing my horse, perhaps I might. I thought he was very near

being angry on such an occasion once; and the carman thought so too and left off. No, I am not of consequence enough to make him angry. He looks away over my head, as you would look over a curl of smoke. He makes me mad!"

"That is a sign that looks dangerous, Ernestine," our hostess said slyly.

"I shall not do him any harm, Mrs. Bowdoin," said the girl laughing. "I am going to take Mr. Holland in hand, and see what I can manage in *his* case."

The talk now diverged, but my thoughts remained where they had been. I was querying why the mention of Mr. Iredell's name should move me so, to so much pleasure and pain both at once. I know, the letter last summer and Olive's course concerning it gave me pain enough; but I thought I had got over that; got accustomed to it; let it go. Surely, so I had. And what then makes this pain? and what the pleasure? when I hear him spoken of. It is not simply the recalling of pleasant hours; it is not *that* at all; it is a warm thrill of delight that runs over me at the thought of himself, when people speak of him. He was so good to me; but it is not that; it is not gratitude; it is the thought of himself. Noble, and strong, and good, as I never saw any other. It is intelligible, I think, the pleasure which comes over me at the sound of his name. But whence the *pain?* For it is pain; a little sharp sting which makes me catch my breath. It must be because of that letter. And surely that is very

foolish. What if I would like to see him again, to see him every now and then, to have him for a friend? there is nothing extravagant in that supposition, for he is everybody's friend, and he was mine when I was in Philadelphia. But somehow, I wish people would leave his name alone.

Nov. 5.

SEVERAL things have happened in the fortnight past, which I will set down if I can. It is difficult to write some things.

In the first place, Miss Forella quite fulfilled her threat, or promise, made the day she came. She took Mr. Holland in hand. He was forced to be continually occupied with her. She argued with him, she received instruction from him, she rallied him; she made constant demands upon him for this or the other service she wanted rendered; she read to him, and she made him read to her. I could not make out whether to all this he succumbed against his will or no; he certainly succumbed. Mrs. Bowdoin had of course her share in the entertainment, whatever it were, that went on between them. I was left out. I was quite willing to be left out; perhaps that was one reason; but however it were, I sat by and heard what was said and done, while I had no more part in it than if I had been a piece of furniture. Miss Forella chose to have it so; whether Mr. Holland liked to have

it so, I cannot tell; perhaps he did. Mrs. Bowdoin did not. She stopped me one evening as we were going up to bed; the others were already upon the stairs, and we heard their voices carrying on an eager dialogue, which had indeed threatened to be endless down in the drawing room.

"Desire," said my hostess as she turned down the lamp,—"you are very quiet!"

"Yes, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"Why don't you talk more?"

"I suppose, because I have nothing that I want to say," I replied smiling.

"You have enough to say," returned my hostess. "Why do you let yourself be cut out so? do you know she cuts you out?"

"Yes," I said.

"Why do you let her?"

"I like it."

"I don't!"

"It suits me. I am very much entertained, and very happy. I do not wish anything changed."

"It does not suit me," said Mrs. Bowdoin lowering her voice still further. "I don't want Ernestine to get hold of Mr. Holland."

"Do you think there is danger?"

"I can't tell, but I am afraid of it. She would never get fond of *him*, but he might be bewitched. She is bewitching."

"Yes," I assented. "She is."

"But she is not the right person for Julius Holland."

"No." I assented again. "I do not think she is."

"Well then," said Mrs. Bowdoin smiling, "why don't you prevent it?"

"Prevent what, Mrs. Bowdoin?"

"Mischief. You can."

"I do not see that I can," I answered. "I should be sorry to see Mr. Holland entangled;—but I cannot hold out a false bait to save him, even if it *would* save him."

"You know it would," Mrs. Bowdoin whispered. "And I do not want you to hold out a *false* bait, at all. Nor any bait; only do not let Ernestine have everything her own way."

So we went up to bed, for we could not linger longer; however, if Mrs. Bowdoin only knew it, she had made it more than ever impossible for me to attempt a diversion in Mr. Holland's favour. I wished she had kept her hints to herself. They had the only one effect to bring a certain consciousness upon me, rather, to bring it out into full light. It is very odd, what an effect lies in the mere matter of being put into words. A thing changes its character, takes body as it were, that has been altogether vapoury and nebulous. Mrs. Bowdoin did not absolutely suggest a new idea to me; nevertheless, once spoken out and set in the full light of actuality, it startled me, as it had not done before. Startled, and annoyed. Something else soon banished that.

The very next evening it was. Miss Forella had

been having her own way, I am bound to say, all the morning. She had made Mr. Holland first walk with her. I would not go, though he tried to draw me in. So much fruit Mrs. Bowdoin's suggestions immediately bore. I *could* not go. At home again, she made him play battledore and shuttlecock with her. Their walk had not been very long; I do not know how that happened; and now she relieved her spirits with wild revelry at home. She played like a sprite, or a witch; it was impossible not to be amused and impossible not to admire; for Miss Forella was a striking figure, in a close fitting dress of dark red lustreless silk, which somehow set off her black eyes and her beautiful black hair, and in which she skipped about the room and sprang and glided and almost flew, after her shuttlecock. Mrs. Bowdoin and I looked on and laughed. Mr. Holland had enough to do to mind his own. One would have thought she would be quiet after this exercise; for she was talking all the time; but she seemed to be possessed by a demon of unquietness. I ran away and took a walk alone in the November wind, which blew me about famously. It sent me in very much freshened up and feeling very cheerful and strong; and so I came to the table, not knowing what sort of a supper was before me.

It was supper that evening, not dinner. Owing to some confusion in the household, we had that day an early dinner; and now a tea more substantial than our wont.

"Buttered lobster!" cried Miss Forella; "how

good it is! Where did you learn to have buttered lobster, Mrs. Bowdoin? I never saw it anywhere but here and at Mrs. Iredell's."

"Mrs. Iredell's? How came you to see it at Mrs. Iredell's? Do you visit there?"

"O yes—just a little—exchange calls once in a while, as one does with everybody."

"I thought they never gave general entertainments, not to people of your sort."

"They don't. Isn't it mean of them? when they have that beautiful old place, and house, and everything? If I was a chimney sweep, I suppose I might stand a chance of being asked. But don't you know, Mrs. Bowdoin, that I always do what I set my mind on?"

"Do you, Ernestine? I know you try."

"Well, I do it, or I get it, whatever it is. I always do, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"I wish I could say as much."

"You haven't brass enough," the girl went on with a peculiar smile. "It is brass that does it. You have some, but you have not enough."

"I am much obliged for your good opinion!"

"Which part of it?" asked Ernestine slyly, and still laughing. "Are you most flattered by my allowing that you have some, or by my criticism that you have not enough?"

"*You* have enough, at all events," replied our hostess. "You are an impudent girl. But go on, and tell me how you managed to get an invitation to the Iredells'."

"And buttered lobster. It was delicious; and the lettuce was as fresh and crisp and delicate as anything you ever saw in your life. And then just the right crackers to eat with it. Crackers are the thing. O they know, out there! They give a good time to the chimney sweeps, when they have 'em. But as I am not in that class of society, as you observe, the thing had to be managed. We were due for a call; and I persuaded mamma to go early, and I made the coachman drive fast; so that we got there just precisely at lunch time. And as we were miles from home and sustenance, of course humanity suggested that it would be proper to give us something. And the something turned out to be chocolate and buttered lobster. I never think of buttered lobster without thinking of Mr. Iredell now."

"Isn't it a beautiful place?"

"All in keeping too. I like things all in keeping. But that is a pleasure generally denied me. Mrs. Bowdoin, what is Mr. Iredell doing up this way?"

I felt a sudden chill come over me. I do not know why; the words had no particular signification; yet there was a strange cold wave flooding my heart. The feeling was even physical. Mrs. Bowdoin immediately took the words up.

"This way?" she said. "He is not in Boston. I should have heard of him if he had been here."

"No, not in Boston. He is roaming round somewhere—after mischief."

"You do not like Max Iredell?" said Mrs. Bowdoin, eyeing her.

"Yes, I do; but he is so abominably grave. Nobody has a right to look so grave."

"He knows how to laugh," said Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Perhaps; but all the rest of the time he looks as grave as if the world was going to ruin."

"Well, isn't it?"

Miss Forella pouted. "Now, Mrs. Bowdoin, I am not going to take that from you. You like the world as well as I do, and enjoy it as much. It won't do for *you* to preach."

"I have no doubt Mr. Iredell enjoys it."

"He's different," said Miss Forella concisely. "And what I want to know is, what is he doing up this way? Miss Burgoyne, do you know?"

"I do not know anything about Mr. Iredell," I said; feeling unaccountably startled by this appeal to me.

"People are talking about him,"—Miss Forella went on, eating her lobster, but looking over it at me.

"People always talk," said Mrs. Bowdoin. "And in the case of a man like Max Iredell, of course they talk. He cannot stir but they talk. It don't mean anything.

"*C'est selon.* Sometimes it means something. Mrs Bowdoin, why was Mr. Iredell never married?"

"I don't know. I suppose he was never suited."

"It is rumoured that he is suited now."

"Suited? Max Iredell? Who has been found to suit him?" cried Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Name has not transpired. But he has been dawdling about in the mountains up here somewhere, they say; and it is reported that he has been making certain negotiations and arrangements in that line."

Mrs. Bowdoin declared she did not believe a word of it; such negotiations on the part of such a member of society would be certain to excite too much attention and remark to be kept secret.

"O, you see, it is not in Boston, nor at Saratoga, nor Newport, nor Nahant, nor any other such place. He has been in the mountains; not the White Mountains particularly; but in a rustic neighbourhood somewhere; and he has staid so long and kept so quiet that people believe he must have reasons. You haven't heard of his coming to your place, Miss Burgoyne?"

Again a sharp glance over her plate at me. It was utterly unreasonable that her rambling words should have such an effect; but the blood receded to some quarter unknown and left my cheeks cold. I *felt* them grow cold, down to my lips. Nobody I suppose remarked it, or anything else in my appearance or manner; I answered with great quietness, and the talk immediately passed on; but where it went to, I do not know. I could not hear. My ears seemed to have a rushing and a roaring in them; I think it was the roar of the great sea of this world, which deafened my facul-

ties. I sat out the evening, in my usual silence, and was glad when we broke up and I could go to my room and be alone.

There was no thought of rest in me. I opened the window and sat down by it. My room was warm, after the luxurious fashion of Mrs. Bowdoin's house, which is warmed with steam throughout; and I could not breathe rightly. Outside the air was clear and cool, not harsh, with a November wind chasing the clouds. There was a certain inexplicable companionship in nature; I got close to the window and sat with my head out in the sweet, strong air. Was it because I felt there was nothing sweet or strong in me? I sat there some time before thoughts began to give any account of themselves, just getting long breaths of heaven's air.

And indeed, what had my thoughts to busy them so confusedly? Nothing, that I could as it were lay my hand on; or nothing that I dared. Perhaps it was that. Nevertheless, a dim, dark foreboding possessed me. Grant I had no proof, no real evidence; and I had not, I suppose; all the same, I was convinced. Or worse than convinced; shaken with an intolerable fear, under which I felt at once the torment of uncertainty and the pressure of assurance. I suppose, without reckoning it, my mind did gather up evidence enough to make it assured. I was not however, considering that or weighing the evidence; but looking past it at the effect of this thing on my life; it was something

that took me greatly by surprise. I had not known that my happiness hung upon anything outside of myself. I thought I had been unreasonably troubled about that letter last summer, and the never hearing again; and I had argued with myself and scolded myself, and forcibly turned my thoughts away to other things; at home to my work, here to history and philosophy and German; and I thought I had succeeded. I thought all was right with me. And now, came a revelation which took away my breath. Truth put out her hand and pulled the veil off the subjects I had been trying carefully to cover up; and I saw them without any disguise, to my terror. What was worse than all, it was *wrong* for them to be there to see. I had no business to depend so much on what was not given me for my dependence. I had no right to care so greatly for what was not meant for my enjoyment. And oh! in any case, I ought not to care so much that I grudged what I had not, to somebody else who had it. For that, I felt, was what I was doing. And I think, of all horrible feelings it is one of the worst. To be poor in the matter of one's desires, to know one must be poor, must do without, must bear the loss,—that is bad enough, bitter enough sometimes; but if, in addition to that, one knows somebody else has what one wants and if one is unwilling somebody else should have it—can anything exceed the terrible pang of that? With all the rest, to have that sense of intense wrong-doing on one's own part,

which is so unbearable; wrong and meanness; wrong towards another, who does not deserve it, and wrong towards God whose will is right and must be right; and more than that, whose will is *love*, not only towards others but also towards me. I felt it all, without putting it in words as I am doing now; and my heart seemed to be on fire with pain. Not a generous glow and flame, but the gnawing tooth of a slow fury. O I was wrong, I knew it; I was very wrong; all good seemed to have died out of me. But then I seemed to be dead generally. Life was gone; my life, that is. I could see neither hope nor light anywhere ahead. And nobody must know. I must let no one mark anything. To all eyes I must be just the same; while there was this difference, that yesterday I was alive, and now I was dead. It is true, as I told myself, I had as yet no proper confirmation of my fears; nevertheless the real state of things in myself had been revealed to me, and nothing could change or hide that again. I was alternately cold with terror, and hot with shame. The November wind,—how it sighed past me, stripping at every gust more of the yellow leaves from the trees and scattering them in showers on the ground. I could not see them fall, but I could hear them, coming down with a light dry rustle and impact like enough to that of raindrops on a shingle roof when the rain is beginning. There was no rain to-night, though the sky was more or less cloudy; the only shower was of the dry leaves that had

done their work. I suppose it is like that with men, I thought to myself; so, no doubt, to the eye that sees all, there is moment by moment a crowd of human lives loosened from their hold to earth and dropping away out of this state of existence; swept away, out of memory. If one's work were done, and one could go too!—And again the wind swept by with its rustle of new gathered leaves. I think nature is unsympathizing when one is in pain. Is it because of the immoveableness and unchangeableness of its ways, which take no heed with what eyes and ears we are looking and listening?

I was so dumb and stupid with misery that I do not know and did not notice how the hours went by. I staid at the window; too much wrought up, I suppose, to be in danger of taking cold; but indeed the night was gentle. I know I got no relief; towards morning I slumbered, from sheer exhaustion; and then roused up and dressed for breakfast. How can one do it? how does one do it? I think I was very much like my usual self at breakfast; at any rate no one either put or looked a question. Talk went on as it always did; the full current of life was sweeping on its way, and no one knew that one of the company had been over night cast up on the shore, stranded, and left there. But indeed, how do I know that that was true of only one? What does the world know? or even our nearest associates? The stream flows just as smoothly where somebody has gone down; the

sunlight glitters back as brightly from the windows of a prison as anywhere else, if it happen to strike them.

I waited now and as it were held my breath, till I should get a letter from Olive. She was never a good correspondent; her silence did not necessarily mean anything. Her writing *might*. That day I got no letter, and went to bed a little quieted. The next day it came. It was not till afternoon; the usual sending to the post-office had been delayed that day. We had come home from a drive, when Mrs. Bowdoin seized the letter bag in the hall, and cried out,

"Here's a letter for you, Desire. Olive has been good."

Has she? I thought, going up the stairs slowly with my fingers growing as cold as ice. I trembled. I was afraid to open the envelope. I laid off hat and cloak, took the letter in my hand, and sat down, for I felt too weak to stand.

Well! The letter told me all I had feared to hear. It was true. Olive was not very effusive nor very explicit; only she gave me the fact that Mr. Iredell had asked her to marry him and she, of course, had consented. It was not what I should call a satisfactory letter, quite apart from the nature of the facts communicated.

I laid the letter down and brushed my hair. For presently the dinner-bell would ring, and I had no attack of illness to plead, to keep me up stairs. Then I locked the letter up and sat down to wait.

For the present, what I had to do was to hide myself, so I might as well begin up in my room. The dinner and the evening would be over, in time; and so would life, in time. I remember, a quiver seized my lip just there; and I had to summon up my forces and command myself determinately; and the bell rang, and I went down the soft-carpeted stairs, feeling that life had nothing soft for me any more. Nothing remained but to bear, and to do. How much to bear, what all to do, those were the only questions.

"Desire, my love! you look pale," cried Mrs. Bowdoin as we sat down.

"I am cold, a little."

"Soup will warm you. Here, Johnson, to Miss Burgoyne. My love, take a glass of wine. Do! Mr. Holland, the sherry is by you."

"No, thank you. I do not need it," I said.

"Just for once," said Mr. Holland, decanter in hand. "You *do* look pale. Let me give you a little,—just a little?"

But I declined.

"Mr. Holland," said my lively vis-à-vis, "Miss Burgoyne is a tea-totaller. Don't you know that? Also she remembers the time when she used to write in her copybooks that 'Consistency is a jewel.' She is not going to let you cheat her out of her principles."

"Miss Burgoyne knows I would not cheat her, into or out of anything," Mr. Holland answered, with his hand on the decanter still, and looking at

me. "But you do not think there is any harm in an occasional glass of *good* wine?"

"Do you not think there are some people to whom it is not without danger?"

"You are not one of those people."

"How do you know that?"

"*Are* you?" said he laughing.

"The question is not whether I am, or whether you are. If it is dangerous to some people, and you do not know whom, and *they* do not perhaps know themselves, then your question is answered."

"How answered? Mrs. Bowdoin has wine on her table; and *she* would not do it if she thought it any harm."

"I beg Mrs. Bowdoin's pardon," I said. "You asked me the question. I must reply truly, as I thought, if I answered at all."

"I excuse you," said my hostess pleasantly. "I do not set myself up as infallible. But I confess, I have not the courage to act upon your view."

"I have not the courage to act upon any other," I said.

"You are thinking of the good of others simply?" asked Mr. Holland. "How would your drinking a glass of wine here, at this table, today, when you look as if you needed it,—how would it touch your influence over the actions of others, at other tables and other times?"

I looked at Mr. Holland and smiled at him

though my heart was clean dead within me, I looked and smiled calmly, I know.

"There is an old Spanish proverb," I said. "'If you do not wish a thing known of you, *do not do it.*' Either you drink wine or you do not. If you *do*, there is nobody to explain what or where or why or how much; and your example and influence are thrown on that side."

"But suppose a physician ordered it?"

"Of course that might alter the case."

"Miss Burgoyne, it seems to me unreasonable that one person's life should be so ordered to meet the necessities of another. That is a sort of infringement of liberty."

"Voluntary—" said I.

"But what is life good for?"

"Just to do the will of God," I said; and with that I had nearly burst into tears and broken down. I restrained myself with a violent effort, and swallowed hot soup till I could look up again. And I tried to keep silent the rest of the evening, yet was not able. I was continually drawn in to talk. All the evening I grasped those words as a kind of staff in my hand, and leaned upon them. "To do the will of God"; and I was doing it now, in keeping up and mingling in the general conversation and playing my part in the society. That was the work of the minute, the duty of the evening. I did it, I tried to do it, even though to myself my voice sometimes sounded hoarse. I was glad to keep the conversation away from Chester-

field; I was so afraid Mrs. Bowdoin might ask me what news I had had; but she did not, and the long evening at last was ended.

As I went slowly up the stairs, there came into my head a picture in an old Annual of a little child leaning against the stem of a tree, "tired of play"; and some lines of N. P. Willis that were written for it or printed with it—

> "Tired of play! tired of play!—
> What hast thou done, the live-long day? . . . . "

And then after an interval the words ran on,—

> "There will come an eve to a longer day,
> That will find thee tired,—but not of play!
> When thou wilt lean, as thou leanest now,
> With drooping limbs and an aching brow,
> And wish the shadows would faster creep,
> And long to go to thy quiet sleep. . . . . "

I do not know by what perversity these lines came to me now; but I thought my heart would break. Only I knew it would not; I was strong and sound, and could bear and live through it. All the long day? And young as I was, the day might be very long. I got to my room, shut the door, dropped my work out of my hands, and myself on the first seat I could find. Constraint was over. I might think.

One of my first thoughts was, that I was never to have done with constraint. Never any more, except only when alone as now; never to look and

act as I felt. I must put on an accurately fitted mask, and never appear without it. My face must be smooth, my voice clear. Of all things, nobody must ever suspect how it had been with me. Olive must not, for it was not her fault and she could not help it; still less must Mr. Iredell. He must never guess. Other than those two, there was nobody at home whose scrutiny I need particularly fear. If I could only escape seeing *them!* If I could go on a mission to China or Burmah and be lost to this new world; or if even I could take service as a lady's maid and go travelling through Europe. But I must see them, those two. I must be present at their wedding, and bear myself sisterly; and *how* I was to do it, I did not see.

For a long, long time the hours as they came and went found and left me in a maze. Under pressure of pain so great that I could not much disentangle its several forms. I was aroused, in a certain way, by hearing the great clock in the hall below strike two. The night was going on its way, and in due course the morning would come; and I was not ready, nor even getting ready, to meet it. Something must be done. I must get hold of something, by which my clasp would not give way. I must have help, if help were anywhere to be had. None human, I knew. I would have given uncounted sums, if I had had them, for some human voice to talk to me and advise me. It is a natural cry in distress, I suppose; and I bethought me, that when it is uttered in vain there

must be a good reason. Why was I so left alone in sorrow? It *must* be, because the Lord would have his child's trust come to himself. Ay; if I had somebody else, doubtless I would not go to God; and now I must go to God. What could he do for me? I began to think, what promises there were; feeling about in the dark for them, like a man in the water and floundering, grasping for a rope. What had the Lord promised? Alas, for a good while I could only remember that he had let trouble come upon me! life-long, inalienable, irremediable trouble. For what had he done it? In his doings there is always a wherefore. Yes, I knew that; I remembered it now; the fact that I did not know the wherefore, did not change the other fact. And what had I said to Mr. Holland at dinner? "Life is, to do the will of God." And so I will, my Lord! I cried; only shew me what it is! And then it came to me, that my first duty was to trust him and never let a point of doubt of him enter my mind. I must shew—to angels and devils, if men could not see it,—that I trusted my Father in heaven and did not question his love; whatever happened. Does not the apostle say that he and his fellows were a spectacle to angels? There is no honour one can do a friend, like trusting him; and God's love may be trusted. As soon as I saw that, I began to cry, and it relieved me a little. But I knew tears would do no other good, and they did not flow long. Then I remembered another thing. "Call upon me in

the day of trouble; *I will deliver thee.*" I almost started.

How? Not always from the trouble, or at least from the cause of trouble. Here, for instance, the cause of the trouble was a fixed fact; I could not, any more than I would, pray to have it undone. No, and if I could, I do not want anything that is not the Lord's will. It would be no pleasure to me. So then here is a sort of beginning of a stay for me to rest on;—that what has happened is the Lord's will. But he says, "I will deliver thee." How then? If it means anything, it means that he will take away the power of the pain, the *trouble* itself, even when the original occasion of the trouble remains. So it was when Paul prayed to have his thorn in the flesh taken away; it was not taken away, but instead, he had such revelations of grace given to him that his trouble became a cause of rejoicing.

Now in my case? If the Lord has taken away something earthly from my life, he certainly means to give me instead something heavenly; if other friends fail, he will be a special friend to me. I saw this. I am afraid I watered this thought also with my tears; but yet it was a solace, and I held it fast. And then I felt sure that in the exceeding difficulties of my way before me, in the matter of behaving myself aright, I should have help. I think towards four o'clock, between exhaustion and a certain rest upon this hold my heart had found, I fell asleep.

Nov. 8.

I HAVE a feeling as if I were lame all over, from the shocks and concussions of these two days. Mental, not bodily; yet I seem to be aching from head to foot.

The first day passed as usual, and I suppose I seemed much as usual, for no one remarked anything out of the common. But yesterday it was different. Miss Forella and Mrs. Bowdoin both got letters. They were in the hall at the time; I was in the dining room arranging a vase of greenhouse flowers. There was no pleasure in it; but for weeks I had been accustomed to dress the flowers, and I went on with the habit. The letters came; I heard the rustling and crackling of sheets unfolded and envelopes bursting; and then came outcries.

"Mrs. Bowdoin!—Desire Burgoyne!"

"What do you want?" said Mrs. Bowdoin in the amused manner which Miss Forella often excites. "What do you want of Desire?"

"Call her here!" said Ernestine.

"What do you want of her? She is dressing flowers in the dining room."

"I want her. Call her to come here, Mrs. Bowdoin. Here is news for you! but I won't tell it till Desire comes. It's for her too."

"Desire"—Mrs. Bowdoin raised her voice a little,—"here is something that is said to concern you."

"What is it, Mrs. Bowdoin?" I answered.

"I don't know! Some of Ernestine's news. Come and hear it."

"I can hear where I am."

"Yes, but I can't *see* where you are," said Miss Forella; "and I want to see your face. Come to the door."

"Why should you see my face?" I asked, feeling much as I suppose men feel when they first go into battle and the deadly shells begin to whistle around them. Leave my cover? Not I.

"I just want to see your face," the young lady repeated. "Come to the door!"

"What is it, Ernestine?" said Mrs. Bowdoin, beginning to be curious, I could hear by her voice. "Some of your Philadelphia news?"

"And how does it touch Miss Burgoyne?" Mr. Holland added. "She is not a Philadelphian."

"Do you know what she is?" said Ernestine. "She is deep."

"I never thought she was shallow," Mr. Holland retorted. "Did you?"

I could guess what sort of a look rewarded this speech, but I did not see it. Presently Miss Forella began again, addressing me.

"If you can't come to the door, I can, Miss Burgoyne;" and she was as good as her word, taking up a position in the doorway. "Now, I do not see your face, it is true, bent over the flowers; but you cannot keep it so permanently. And now I ask you, Are you coming to play the great lady in Philadelphia?"

"I?" said I, feeling as if a trip-hammer had struck me.

"What do you mean, Ernestine?" Mrs. Bowdoin demanded laughing.

"She knows. Answer! O you sly cat! Is *this* what your demureness is up to?"

"I do not know what you mean," I said; and indeed it was true. Her charge was not what I expected, and utterly confused me.

"Your face tells another story. Mrs. Bowdoin, you cannot see. Her cheeks are as red as two '*géants de bataille*,'—flaming,—deep crimson. You must call that new red dahlia of yours the 'Desire.' It will fit."

"But do go on, and leave Desire alone. What is your news? I have heard nothing yet," said our hostess.

"Why, she is going to marry Mr. Iredell!" cried my tormentor. There was a kind of storm of exclamations and questions at that, of which I heard nothing but the din. I do not know what they said. It seemed to me that everybody was talking together. The first thing I distinguished and did understand was Mrs. Bowdoin's voice calling my name. I answered.

"Is this true, Desire? is it true?"

"No, Mrs. Bowdoin, it is not true."

"O but it is," cried Ernestine. "It is known in Philadelphia; there is no use in her trying to mystify us. Mamma writes plainly, that Mr. Iredell is going to marry a Miss Burgoyne, from up this way

somewhere. So there, now! What do you say to that? Mamma knows what she writes about; she wouldn't dare send me a piece of false news."

"Desire," Mrs. Bowdoin called from the hall,—"Desire, come here and shew your face, and let me see if you are telling truth."

I felt I must do it. I stepped to the doorway and confronted them all, how, I do not know.

"It is my sister, Mrs. Bowdoin," I said.

"Your *sister*," exclaimed Miss Forella. "It ain't true! She's Miss Burgoyne, no doubt, but she was never the Miss Burgoyne he cared about. I have seen him with you and with her; and I know."

I think it is impossible to tell the pain this speech gave me. Vivisection, I should suppose, might be something like it. But I stood still and faced them all and repeated quietly, I think I did it quietly, my assertion, that it was my sister.

"My dear," said Mrs. Bowdoin, "your cheeks are like white paper, and your eyes are like two burning coals. If there were any combustible material about you, you would be on fire in a minute."

"And do you wonder at it?" I said.

"I guess she is innocent, Ernestine," said my hostess. "But is it true, that Olive is going to make such a match? Going to marry Maximilian Iredell?"

"I believe it is true."

"Of course it is true!" said Ernestine. "And aren't you glad, Desire?"

"Max Iredell!" Mrs. Bowdoin repeated. "She

is a lucky girl. I haven't seen Olive in a long while. Is she as handsome as you are?"

"Much handsomer."

"*C'est selon*,"—repeated Ernestine, who was eyeing me sharply. "Everybody don't think so. Are you delighted at your sister's good fortune?" she asked again.

I made no answer, I believe; and Mrs. Bowdoin spoke for me.

"Of course she is; and of course it will be a nice thing for Desire too. Now she will go and live in Philadelphia. Olive cannot do without her."

I knew somebody else that could less easily do without me, and I knew I should stay in Chesterfield. I went back to my flowers, leaving the others to discuss things. Ah, how the touch of the flowers hurt me! and why should it? Why should the beautiful luxuriant geraniums seem to tell me that my time of flourishing was over? Why should the roses make me feel sick, and camellias say to me that henceforward I was to be shut up in Chesterfield *alone?* and why all their beauty and grace and sweetness generally mock me, and wound my fingers when I took hold of them? I finished my task, remembering that henceforth I must accustom myself to cups of pain, even distilled for me from all healthy sources. That was for me in the future. I might as well like the taste of bitter and grow used to it. I took my work and sat down with the others, and heard their talk, which ran all over and all round the subject in-

teresting me and them so much. I sat still and bore it, biting in pain, catching my breath sometimes, forcing myself to sit still and work quietly, while I regarded my piece of sewing with absolute loathing and longed only to throw it down and run away and be alone. I sat out the afternoon till dinner; and then I bore the dinner, and made believe eat; or rather made believe want to eat; the eating was real. And then I sat out the evening; and when I went up to my room I felt as if I had lived a hundred years since three days before. This night I slept for very stupor of pain and weariness of struggle.

So I think I had a little more strength the next morning; for in matter of strength the mind depends a good deal on the body. I was up in good season, and had a long hour and a half to myself. I went to my Bible now, and spent the time before an open page.

It is a misery of such seasons in one's life, that the very Bible hurts one. Words which are at other times so sweet, now press a sore spot, and one winces. And yet,—"to whom shall we go?" I would not be turned aside; and I found at last a word which I clasped as for life. Jesus said, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." The promise is absolute; there is no reservation; it ought to be trusted. I understood of course that there *are* reservations, in the nature of the case. I know that disobedience, for instance, cannot hope to receive favours; of course careless asking would

not get attention, nor would unbelieving asking be graciously heard; nor unsubmissive asking. I remember words enough which establish all that. But Jesus said also, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask *what ye will*, and it shall be done to you." That means of course, obedient, trusting, believing asking; and he says, "it shall be done." I was hardly up to asking yet; but I took those two words in my arms and lay down at Jesus' feet with them. There was hope for me, nay, there was certainty, that I should be able to do right and to feel right, however things went; and with that certainty my heart was to a degree quieted. Before, it had seemed impossible that I should live and do what I had to do; meet what I had to meet; now I knew I could. And those other wonderful words recurred to me. I never understood them before,—

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."—

Our dwelling-place. So it is the experience of the whole church upon earth. And I, in my pain, I am just coming to know and find where I must dwell and hide, if I ever would have my right home. Must one be always driven there by pain, I wonder? How then about Mr. Iredell? But I reflected I was meddling with what I knew nothing about; my business was with myself; and for me, this was the way, but also, that is the home.

"Ye shall ask what ye will."—I was too tossed and beaten about yet to know exactly what to ask

for; only I prayed to be delivered from envy, from self-will, and repining; so that I might with a clear brow and steady hand do the work given me. Just *what* work I did not ask; for to-day that was all I could grasp. The promise I seized, as a wounded man on the field of battle might seize the surgeon without whose help he knows he will bleed to death. And something like such a staunching of a death wound came to me.

I had need that day of all the strength of every sort that I could muster. I wonder why trying things do sometimes seem to pile themselves up and heap themselves together for one's confusion. It pleased Mrs. Bowdoin, to begin with, to make the subject of my sister's marriage the theme of the morning.

"I have not seen Olive for so long a time," she remarked. "I do not feel that I know her. What sort of a woman is she?"

"Not much changed," I said I thought.

"Yes, that will do very well for you," said Mrs. Bowdoin laughing, "for you always knew her; but I didn't. You say she is handsome?"

"Yes. Very handsome."

"Your style?"

"No," said Miss Forella. "Not her style at all. What would you say *is* Desire's style, Mrs. Bowdoin?"

Mrs. Bowdoin looked at me, laughed a little pleased laugh, and finally came out with her answer.

"A Cape Jessamine."

Miss Forella pouted. "Heavy—" said she.

"Sweet,"—said Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Too sweet, that's what I say. Smothering."

"Nonsense! It is sweet, and pure, and elegant; and that describes Desire in three words. Now what is Olive?"

"Not sweet," said our polite companion.

"Hey, Desire?" said Mrs. Bowdoin. "I am curious, you know, because I know Mr. Iredell; I am curious to know what sort of a woman he has chosen. He is so very peculiar, himself; so few women would suit him; he has found nothing that would do in all the cities he has lived in—"

"They say he broke his heart over somebody a long while ago," Miss Forella interrupted; "and that that is the reason he never married before."

"I don't believe it. And now he has come up to the mountains of New Hampshire and picked himself out a wife there!"

"No, Mrs. Bowdoin," Ernestine went on, "she went down to Philadelphia to see him. It's very useful to have a married sister living among people; it gives the unmarried sisters a capital chance. I wish I had a sister in some strange place. There's nothing like striking the eye with novelty."

"I do not think so," said Mrs. Bowdoin. "I think it is just the other way. Men will take anybody that happens to be near them, generally. It's propinquity—there needs nothing more. But Max Iredell is not one of your common sort of people;

and I am curious to know what the woman is that he has chosen."

"Well, I will tell you, Mrs. Bowdoin. She is handsome, and stately and—wise. She knows what she is about."

"Desire, tell me what your sister is like. I cannot make out anything from this girl's chatter."

"Miss Forella has described her, ma'am."

"Truly?"

"With some truth. Olive *has* a great deal of judgment, and calmness to exercise it; and I think she has a great deal of sense."

"Is she as religious as you are?"

I hesitated, and Miss Forella spoke out. "No, she isn't."

"*Not* religious?" cried Mrs. Bowdoin.

"Yes, she is," I said; "but she and I do not always think alike."

"I am afraid Max has got the wrong one," said my hostess. "Why religion is the whole of life to Max Iredell."

"That is what spoils him," said Miss Forella.

"He is not spoiled, and you do not think he is. Come! I won't have you make believe in that way, Ernestine. He is nearer right than you and I, and you know it. But I hope Olive is good enough for him!"

I had got about as much as I could stand, for one time; and I broke off from the conversation and went out to take a walk. It was windy and cold; nothing in outer nature spoke soothing to

the storm within; and my walk was a struggle both to mind and body. However I was alone, and I could let the wind dry the tears which came and wet my cheeks.

In the evening I had something harder to bear than even the morning talk. Mr. Holland took an opportunity to tell me that he loved me, and begged me to let him hope that in time he might make himself agreeable to me. Now he is very agreeable to me; but never in all time could he be more. I like him for a friend, I would like to keep him for a friend, and as a friend I could take a great deal of pleasure in him, if that would do. It would not do. He wanted more, and to my very great astonishment, wanted it very persistently and eagerly. I had not dreamed that he liked me; so, I mean. The discovery now filled me with a kind of unendurable torment. It was not simply that I was forced to give *him* pain, though that hurt me and I was grieved to do it. There was another feeling, which I cannot quite analyze; a feeling as if this proposition from one whom I cannot like, mocked the bitter pain of which my heart was full. I cannot say how I wished that such an idea had never come into Mr. Holland's imagination. I made him understand that it could never have a place in mine; and then I ran away and had a great fit of tears. Out of which I came with a sort of sad recognition that the world is full of crossed and tangled threads of human life; mine is but one of many;

and that in the vagueness and confusion only one thing is clear,—that "Life is, to do the will of God." Then, somehow, some time, He will bring out into smooth order all the threads he holds in his hand. I can wait. I will trust. But that distant time of light and peace seems very far ahead; and the way between very long.

Nov. 15.

I BEGAN to look forward with inexpressible dread to my going home. The summons could not be long delayed, I knew. And the very next day after Mr. Holland had so distressed me, it came. Olive wrote that she was to be married soon after New Year's; and wanted my help in the house, as she was naturally very busy with her own affairs.

I packed my trunk, with my heart in my mouth and my hands trembling. How should I do what I had to do? How meet all the faces? One comfort; people would be more curious to look at Olive than to look at me; but our Chesterfield folk have sharp eyes for everybody. And suppose Mr. Iredell were there? Not likely, yet it might be. Well, if he were not there now, he certainly would be another time; it had got to be faced and borne, and as well sooner as later. What an ending this was of my beautiful visit!

So I finished my packing and said my good byes. Mrs. Bowdoin drove into town with me and saw

me established in the car for my night journey. She stocked me with biscuits and sandwiches and cold coffee; and at last left me, very sorry to have me go, I believe. That night was a whirl through the darkness.

It is often a wonder to me, how people bear the troubles of life, who do not know the refuge there is at Christ's feet. How do they stand? For if one can but get to his feet, one is under protection; one knows things are clear to him that are very confused to us; and his eye sees a way for his child through the trackless wilderness, and his hand can guide safely. I knew it that night; and though it was, as I said, a whirl through the darkness, I had a certain rest in the knowledge. I was not trying to guide myself.

Having to wait at one place for a connecting train, I should not reach home until afternoon. I imagined it all beforehand; my walk from the station, a good four miles down the valley, the possible meetings and words with neighbours, every one of which I shrank from, and then the possibility of another encounter at home from which I shrank most of all. But what one imagines is not apt to be the reality. As I left the car at the station the first person I saw was Mr. Iredell.

I think I was perfectly calm and cool in my manner; indeed much more so than I should have been last summer if he had come then to see us as he proposed. Then I should have shewn delight. Ought I now? I could not, and did not. And he did not.

He was calm too, kind, attentive to my wants, as of course a gentleman would be who expected to call me his sister.

Happily the interview was short. Mr. Iredell had driven to the station to take another train himself in an hour or two which would carry him away; he had come earlier than was quite necessary, in order that, if I arrived, the wagon might take me home. He explained this while he was putting me into it and seeing that somebody did the same for my baggage.

"O I could have walked home," I said. "I expected to walk home."

"I do not doubt you could," said he; "but after a night in cars and station rooms one does not always feel like such a tramp for one's next experience. Good bye!"

He raised his hat, and the wagon moved off.

So it was over, and I had seen him, and I had not to fear finding him at home. There was a ringing in my ears and a great throbbing at my heart, and I did not hear or heed the remarks my driver was addressing to me. I suppose I answered them; I have no idea how. All the way I was driving home my thoughts were busy going over and over and over every second of that brief interview; living it over first, and then trying to analyze it. Somehow Mr. Iredell did not seem to me just as he had been in Philadelphia; no, not even as he had seemed to me when I was yet quite a stranger. I told myself that was natural. How could he seem

the same, when relations were so changed? But then, the change of relations was on the side of nearer intimacy and closer friendship, and the change of manner seemed the other way. I could not disabuse myself of the feeling that Mr. Iredell liked me better a year ago than he did now. I had done nothing to deserve a lessening of his regard, and it hurt me. I speculated over it, thinking that now perhaps he was so taken up with Olive and the love of her, that he had no eyes nor thought for any other woman, even though it were Olive's sister. Very right, I said to myself. If I were in Olive's place, I should like it so. And yet, no, I would not. If I were in Olive's place, I should be so satisfied and sure, I should not grudge a little kindly affection to anybody to whom it was right to give it, nor the shewing of such affection. I would be generous, and could afford to let him be generous. I brooded over this for a while, and then pulled myself up short with the reminder that it was nothing I ought to think about at all; nothing that concerned me. Probably in all the future I should see little of Mr. Iredell; what could it matter how he treated me when I did see him? So I got home and went in, thinking how the world had turned round for me since I trod that path and went through that gate last.

I went to the kitchen to find Olive, and there she met me, looking handsomer than I had ever seen her. It struck me that she was cool too, though she said she was glad to see me. That

was nothing strange or new; Olive's manner was never enthusiastic. She was brushing up the floor, and went on with her occupation; while I loosened my bonnet strings and sat down. We must speak to each other of what had come about; and as well soon as syne, as the Scotch say. But I waited for her to begin.

"You have had a good time?" said Olive, sweeping away.

"Mrs. Bowdoin was very kind."

"I thought you were having a good visit, and I would not disturb you; but now I really wanted you, and could not help it."

"Of course. I understood that."

"How do you like my plans?" said Olive, suddenly stopping short in her sweeping and looking at me.

"Your plans? In what respect?"

"Well, my prospects, then?"

"I should think they were very good prospects Mrs. Bowdoin thinks so."

"Are you pleased?"

"I, Olive? I do not see any special reason why I should be pleased."

"It is something, to be brought into such a connection."

"Is it?" said I, and I smiled. "I suppose I am thinking more of what I am losing than of what I am gaining. Didn't it occur to you that there were two sides to it?"

"Were you very much surprised?"

"Yes,—very," I said slowly.

"I was not," said Olive, and she said it with a certain curious accent of assertion. "I knew it would come to that. And now," she went on rapidly, "the wedding is to be very soon; and I am very glad to have you at home, Desire. I would not send for you till I could not help it."

She set up her broom, and I saw that the confidence between us went no further. Indeed, what more could there be to tell? The common chatter of girls about love affairs, their own or other people's, actual or possible, had never been Olive's way or mine. I wanted to hear no details, and she had no thought of giving them. I went slowly up to my room and laid off my wrappers, and looked at the big chestnut trees in the meadow. Grand old things, how magnificent they were now even with all the summer glory gone; each great bough bearing its drapery of snow, capped and outlined in white. There had been a slight snowfall already. How many years they had stood there, in heat and cold; and how the fragile generations of men had passed away before them. In like manner would our generation; and Olive, and Mr. Iredell, and I, would all be gone, and our aches and pains over. A cold philosophy this, to comfort anybody. There came a gentler thought from the chestnut trees; a thought of the way in which they had grown into strength and ripened into beauty; and I remembered how often in the Bible Christians are likened to trees, so growing and flourishing. And there I

broke down. A veil of tears hid the chestnut trees from my sight. I dropped on the floor, I believe, and had a sort of thunder-shower of weeping, which cleared the air. I put away my things after that; changed my dress, and went down to see what there was first to do. I found grandmother seated in state in a wonderful easy chair; a new arrival. I kissed her, and began to set the table for supper.

"So you've come home, Desire!" she said. "Has anybody asked *you* to be married?"

"No," I answered hastily. "At least,—I mean, I have not promised anybody, and am not going to."

"Somebody asked you, hey? Great deal better not, Desire. What do you think of Olive's venture?"

"Safe—" said I.

"*She* thinks so. My! ain't she set up. Did you see Mr. Iredell at the railroad?"

"Yes."

"He went early o' purpose, that the wagon might bring you back. Olive told him he'd have to wait a long spell, but he said he could wait better than you. He's a thoughtful man. Ha' you looked at my cheer?"

"Yes, grandma."

"You did it flying then, for you hain't stopped. Look here, Desire; see; the back goes back and the bottom's on springs, and it's the roomiest thing that ever you see."

"Just like him," I said.

"But la! I'd rather have Olive to home, and let him keep his cheers. What'll you do with the house, all alone by yourself? Is this the kind o' cheer *he* sits in at home?"

"Why no, grandmother; this is a regular old lady's chair."

"You said it was like him. What did you mean?"

"I meant that it was openhanded; kind, and generous."

"Humph!" said grandma; "he's got Olive, and I don't think an easy cheer's much pay for her. 'Tain't to me. Anyhow, I'd rather be in something that would rock."

"That sort of chair is never on rockers."

"Well, I wish 'twas."

I could see however that grandmother had a very great opinion of Mr. Iredell and thought very much of all he said and did. Too much for my comfort; for his name came up every hour in the day. Not brought up by Olive; to do her justice she is very quiet about him and all that concerns her new prospects; but grandma refers to him and to them constantly. I bury myself in work all I can.

Jan. 30, 18—.

IT is over, and Olive is gone.

They arranged to have the wedding celebrated in Philadelphia. That is, Caroline and Olive ar-

ranged it; I believe Mr. Iredell would have been as well pleased to be married quietly here in Chesterfield. Another thing however *he* arranged; that grandmother should go to the wedding; and he prevented objections by sending along with his letter, (in which he rather took it for granted than made the request,) a piece of very handsome black silk. The letter was so gracefully pleasant that Olive's pride could not find any occasion of offence; and grandmother was delighted. I never saw her so pleased. Olive took it differently.

"I wonder what ever has put such a notion into his head!" she said, with the open letter in her hand.

"He thought it would please grandma"—I suggested.

"Rather one-sided kindness," said Olive. "He did not ask whether it would please Caroline, or whether it would please me."

"Why should it not please Caroline?"

"She will want all the room her house has. He never thought of that. Men never do think of household possibilities, I suppose. She will need every bit of her spare room. She means to ask Mrs. Bowdoin."

"Grandmother has the first right to be considered."

"No; *I* have the first right," said Olive; "and Mr. Iredell might have consulted me before doing this. It is just like a man!"

"Not like many men," I could not help saying "It is very kind."

"It is not very kind to me. What will grandma do in such a set of people, so unlike what she is used to? And how is that dress ever to get made up, with all there is to do yet on mine?"

That was a consideration, I confess. However, I worked at the black by day and at the white by night; and after Olive left us, for she went first to Philadelphia, I had time to finish everything. All but a cap, which I knew I must get in Philadelphia. Grandma was in a state of glee which it was touching to see. Nothing, I suppose, in years had given her the pleasure this invitation gave. The honor of it, and the importance, tickled her fancy greatly; and the black silk was a subject of constant self-gratulation. For me, I could have wished that any beneficent agency would have stolen away all *my* dresses, or called me unavoidably in some other direction, or done anything to hinder my taking part in the coming celebration. But those little convenient lifts over rough places rarely come to one's feet; they did not come to mine. Two days before the wedding, grandma and I packed ourselves into the cars and were rushed and whirled after the fashion of the nineteenth century over the miles that lay between us and our goal. Better so, I suppose. A two weeks' journey would have been harder to bear. What a long three days' walk that must have been which Abraham took with Isaac! I was sorry, and yet I was glad, when we steamed into the station at Philadelphia.

Grandma and I occupied the same room at Caroline's, for though Mrs. Bowdoin was not there, other guests were; distant relations; and the house was full. I wondered that my sisters should desire their presence, or anybody's presence, at such a time; but they and I were always wont to see things with different eyes. Grandma is very pleased. Grandma, of course, had been at half breath with astonishment all the way since we left home, it being her first railway journey; and Philadelphia was not calculated to restore her the free play of her lungs.

"Ain't Caroline grown dreadful extravagant?" she began, when she had leisure to make remarks and we were alone.

"People here do not live as we do in Chesterfield," I observed.

"Well, they ain't obliged to; but there's reason in everythin'. Why, Desire, this is a Brussels carpet, strong and good, and not faded nor worn, under my foot."

"Yes," said I. "Well, what of that?"

"We're in the third story."

"Yes, grandma. Caroline had to give her best room, she thought, to our cousins."

"'Tain't that, child; but ingrain's good enough when you get up to the third floor, or a good nice rag carpet either; or a bit of an old one, that's wore. Why, what has Caroline got on her parlour floor, I want to know?"

"Something handsomer than Brussels."

"What's that?"

"They call it Axminster."

"And is that the top of the ladder?"

"O no. There are Persian carpets, and Turkey carpets and Smyrna carpets; much more costly, and more precious."

"I should like to know, what's the sense of it?" said grandma discontentedly. "When you've got a good, strong, well-wove rag carpet under your feet, you've got somethin' as'll last and stay good, and be soft and warm and comfortable; and what is the use o' throwin' down bank notes besides just to trample upon?"

"These carpets are handsomer, grandma."

"I don't want nothin' handsomer than a real good, well-wove rag carpet! Sich a one as I had when I was first married; striped with stripes of red and brown, and here and there a little speck of blue; and it was warm and bright and had an excellent view. I call Caroline real wasteful. Are all these pictures hung up just for you and me? Don't she want 'em down stairs?"

"There are plenty more down stairs; better ones."

"There ain't no fault to these, as I kin see. The frames are beautiful, good enough for anywheres."

"The pictures are not much, grandma."

"What do you mean by 'not much'?"

"I mean, they are not fine; not valuable. Caroline does not care for them particularly."

"Why not? what ails 'em? I think they're

elegant. There's nobody in Chesterfield has got better. I tell you, Caroline's got uplifted."

"It is Philadelphia ways, grandma."

"If that's so, then they ain't good ways. What's the use o' spendin' all you kin, to have nothin' left at the end of it?"

I think she went over nearly all the furniture of the room with the same sort of commentary. At last she got into bed, confessed that the bed was good, and sank immediately to sleep. Olive had begged me to come to her room when I was free. So I went.

Well that grandma's eyes had not been called upon to do duty there! The room was in a litter of dresses, shawls, furs and laces. I stood aghast. Olive's means were not sufficient to account for this display.

"Yes, come in," she said laughing; "you are wondering at me. People have been very kind, Desire. Look— most of these things are presents. Caroline asked what she should give me, and I told her I had nothing to wear; so she and Mr. Birkenstall have just been hunting up pretty nicieties for me. Look at that lace"—putting an exquisite web into my hand,—"that cost, I am afraid to tell you how much. Isn't it lovely? And Mrs. Bowdoin sent that set of furs."

I said little, wondering to myself if my sister understood her bridegroom, and if she were not harbouring expectations of a way of life which it would not be *his* purpose to lead.

"I knew I should not want silver," she went on; "it would be absurd to give me forks or teapots; I *did* want something to dress myself in fittingly."

"This looks, the room does, as if you expected to go into company a good deal," I remarked.

"Must, of course. With Mr. Iredell's position. I am just expecting his gift, now; his wedding gift. I just hope it will be diamonds."

"Olive!—" I cried.

"What?"

"Are you a Christian, and do you want diamonds?"

"A Christian, and do I want diamonds?" Olive repeated. "What has the one thing to do with the other?"

"I do not know," said I. "That is what I asked you."

"And why should not a Christian wear diamonds, and want them to wear?" Olive asked coldly. "Don't you think Christians ought to dress according to their station?"

"Yes," said I;—"as heirs of the kingdom of heaven."

"How is that? Is there any dress peculiar to them, as heirs?" she said scornfully.

"Yes, Olive; because the heirs are servants also; and servants must wear the dress that best fits their work."

Olive was silent a little while, laying some articles into a trunk which stood open. I sat by the fire and took the view. The room was brightly

lighted with gas; the warm glow of the fire was added to that, and gave its mellowing tint on all the riches scattered around. Laces and silks, and ribbands; parcels in brown paper; boxes of suggestive shapes and sizes; and in the midst of all, my sister's fine figure, busy and ordering, the mistress of the riches, the centre of the light. It seemed to me she ought to be very happy, for the warm glow of the room was not warmer or brighter than the prospect that was opening before her as Mr. Iredell's wife. It flashed across me, too, as irrelevant thoughts will at all sorts of times, how Olive had changed; how little of the recluse country girl there was in her air or appearance. She looked and moved entirely fit to be Mr. Iredell's wife, I thought. And yet, she and I had lived in the mountains and seen little indeed of what is called the world. We had lived alone, in fact, and had no intimate associates of any kind. Also our school had been an excellent one; all we learned there had been in the right direction. But I admired Olive nevertheless. She was calm and graceful and self-possessed; truly she had been the latter always; she was dressed in one of Caroline's pretty wrappers; and she looked as if she had never swept a room in her life and didn't know how to skim cream. I mean, as if she had lived all her life away from that circle of associations and in the sphere to which she was about to be transferred. I thought, she ought to be happy; yet there came an odd doubt to me whether she were. That is, happy in

my sense; happy in her own way she was, or she thought she was.

She looked up presently, and startled my thoughts by remarking that I had all sorts of extravagant notions; I would get out of them by and by. I had quite forgotten what we had been talking about, and did not know at first to what she referred; and before I could answer she had gone on.

"I would have made Mr. Iredell take me to Europe; but he did not want to go."

"I suppose he has been there so much," I said.

"But I have not!"

"I suppose he wants to go on with his work."

"Work!" said Olive, sitting back from the trunk and looking at me. "What work?"

"You know, don't you, how Mr. Iredell spends his life?"

"You do not suppose he is going to spend his life in the same manner *now*, do you? That was all very well, while he had no one at home that he cared for or that cared for him. I am not going to let him give himself up to such ways in future. He is too good a man for that."

"Too good, Olive?" said I aghast. "For what?"

"For a city missionary. There are other people to do that sort of thing."

"Are there?" said I; thinking that eighteen hundred years ago we were bid to pray for labourers to be sent into the field, and wondering if she were going to try to keep one out of it. Would she succeed? That I did not believe.

"I am expecting *his* present every minute now," she again went on. "He told me he was not sure of pleasing me; but I do not think he can fail."

I thought not; and just that minute came a knock at the door, and a letter, and two largish deal boxes were brought in. Olive sat down to read her note and the servant departed. I saw Olive's face change. A cloud came over it.

"One is for you," she said briefly.

"One what? For *me*, did you say?"

"One of the boxes. One half my wedding present, apparently. What a strange man!"

"Does he say so?" I asked eagerly.

"Of course. Says, as he is taking me away from you, he 'wants to leave you something pleasant to look at instead.' Open it, do! here's a hammer."

"Open yours first, Olive."

She was too curious and impatient to wait. In her hands the hammer, skilfully wielded, soon brought up the thin cover of the packing case. Under it appeared a quantity of the material which dealers use to wrap up and encase fragile wares. Olive smothered a word of irritation and began to pull out this packing stuff. I seized the hammer now and applied myself to the other case, which I saw bore my name, large and full. My heart beat hard and my fingers trembled. The covers came up. I pulled away carefully and daintily the sawdust which was all that could be seen. By and by my fingers felt something else, something hard; I cleared away the packing now with double eager-

ness and tenderness; at last could lay hold of the precious object lying within and lift it out. There it was on the floor before me, a little pure white marble figure, scarce a foot and a half in length. An involuntary exclamation of heart-delight escaped me.

"Oh!" I cried,—"the St. Cecilia!"

"The *what?*" said Olive. Some great contrast between her tone and mine struck me, and I looked up, startled. For minutes I had forgotten her existence. She was sitting on the floor, as I was, a little way from me, looking not at her own marble, which she had likewise taken out and which stood before her, but over at me; and her face and her tone were those of an extremely dissatisfied person; dark and displeased and disappointed.

"What is yours?" I asked in confusion, too much delighted really to see or care, but feeling the need of saying something.

"The *what*, did you say?" she repeated.

"Mine? O, it's the St. Cecilia."

"What St. Cecilia? and how do you know?"

"I know the story. Don't you know the story? St. Cecilia was one of the martyrs, and was buried in the catacombs. But at the end of the sixteenth century the sarcophagus in which she was buried was discovered and opened; and the saying is that the figure was found undecayed, lying just in the attitude in which she died. And then an artist, who saw it, Stefano Maderna, made a copy in mar-

ble. It is in the church of St. Cecilia at Rome. An inscription underneath says that he, Stefano Maderna, saw the saint's uncorrupted body lying in her tomb, and that the marble image of her is in the very same attitude. And this is a copy."

"What stuff!" said Olive. "You believe it, I suppose. How did she die?"

"She was to have been beheaded, but the lictor could not do it. He struck three blows, and as it was against the law to strike again, left her lying in her blood, with the three gashes in her neck. She lived three days, and died in this position."

I knew the story well enough, for Mr. Iredell himself had told it to me and described to me the statue, which he said was most beautiful. So when I saw it I knew it at once, and justified his words. Most beautiful it was! with the peacefullest, sweetest expression of willing departure, of child-like abandonment to the will of God, that it is possible to imagine; easy and graceful, as such a spirit could not but be; quiet, and happy, and gone! It went to my heart; it found my inner-most thoughts; it touched my most hidden pain. If I had been alone—But Olive sat there opposite. watching me.

"Where did you get all that?" said she.

"What is yours?" I asked hastily, not thinking it best to answer this question.

"Don't you see? if you know marbles so well. This is Niobe."

"Who was Niobe?" said I.

"An unlucky woman who had offended Apollo, I believe, or something like that; and in revenge he shot his arrows into all her children, one after the other. Here, you see, Niobe is endeavouring to shield the last one."

"O, I see. How beautiful!"

"I should like to know what Mr. Iredell expects me to do with this."

"Why, Olive! Set it up and make constant enjoyment of it."

"And a lesson, I suppose. It is just like him."

"A lesson—of what?"

"Don't you see? Protection-giving, and caretaking. I have no doubt he expects me to make this my model, and to be always sheltering something or other; folding in my kind arms some object, which however need not have any personal claim upon me. There the model fails. I find Niobe's action quite natural; but not my imitation of it."

"What makes you think of such a thing?" said I, bewildered.

"It is quite Mr. Iredell's way. He does nothing without a purpose,—don't you know it?"

"Well, that is right."

"No, it isn't," said Olive. "People are meant to play in this world, as well as to work."

"What do you suppose then he means me to learn from this St. Cecilia?"

"Martyrdom—for ought I know," returned Olive. She was in such a mood that I was afraid to speak

to her; and that last word of hers would have stopped me at any rate. She did not know how close it came; and Mr. Iredell certainly did not guess how very appropriate his meaning would have been if it had been that. I looked at the lovely little white figure lying before me, with its ineffable expression of contented acquiescence, even in the strokes of the axe and the death which had lingeringly followed them; and I saw my lesson plain enough. I had much ado not to burst out into a storm of weeping even there. Tears did rush to my eyes, and dropped one by one upon the carpet, as I knelt over the fair little bit of marble.

"What is the matter?" said Olive. It struck me that she was in the condition of an overcharged piece of ordnance which it is dangerous to go near with a spark. She sat on the carpet looking at me; watchful, cold, ready to be suspicious, only there was nothing to be suspicious about; scornful, only it was difficult to shew scorn toward her bridegroom.

"There is enough the matter," I answered. "This statue is very touching to me."

"Statuette—" said Olive.

"Yes, of course; statuette."

"Well, you may as well set it off the floor for to-night. It is twelve o'clock."

I took the St. Cecilia up in my arms and rose to go.

"Are you going to carry it off?"

"Certainly. Your room is full enough without it."

"I don't mind," said Olive. "Well, I will come in and look at it to-morrow."

I carried my precious gift to my room, where grandma had long been fast asleep; set it in the light of the gas burner, and sat down before it. How beautiful! How kind! How very precious for me! What an unending delight, in my plain little home at Chesterfield; where nothing but the strictly matter-of-fact, necessary, practical appliances of life were to be seen, and even in them beauty could not be regarded. What a treasure of beauty here, material and spiritual. And how sweet and unsurpassable its lesson and preaching of truth to me. I looked at it at first I believe with a smile, which quenched in tears; and I had my weeping then, before I went to sleep that night.

The next day we were all of course exceedingly busy; for there were the last things to do that never can be done *till* the last. I did not see Mr. Iredell at all. I believe Olive did, in the evening. I was in my room, still putting the finishing touches to something for her, when she came in. It was then already late. Olive came in and sat down; made remarks about various matters; all the time, I saw, eyeing my St. Cecilia, which lay on the table just in front of me. I wished that I had put it out of sight; an odd thought, but it came to me. I expected she would speak of it, and she did.

"That's a very singular attitude!" she began after a pause in our talk.

"Do you think so?"

"Graceful, though."

"O very graceful!"

"So is the other graceful,—the Niobe."

"Certainly. Nobody ever doubted that, I should think. Very different, but exceedingly graceful."

"One sets the other off. It is a pity they should not be together."

"I don't know—" said I with a glance at my St. Cecilia, and thinking *she* was best alone.

"Did you think you would carry it to Chesterfield?" Olive went on.

"Of course. What else should I do with it?"

"It might get injured. It might get broken. I should think it would be much better to let me take care of it for you."

"Till when?" said I, in dismay and surprise.

"O, till you come to stay with me. You are coming, you know."

"You know I am *not* coming, Olive. You know grandma must have some one to take care of her; and that is my business."

"O but not forever," said Olive.

"I don't know for how long," said I; "and I am not going to measure."

"But still, Desire, you will not be always up there in the mountains; we, Mr. Iredell and I, shall see that you are not; there will be ways of arranging things. I expect you will be a great deal with me."

"I do not know when, Olive," said I, working

away. "I do not see the 'ways' you speak of. I am sure grandmother has no one but me."

"Never mind; you will see when the time comes. We shall manage it. And till then, Desire, I think you had better let me take care of this statuette. It is really beautiful, and it would be a thousand pities it should get injured."

"I will not let it get injured."

"But they throw things about so in the baggage cars."

"I will pack it safely, so that it cannot be hurt."

"It might nevertheless. And then you would be very sorry. Besides, Desire, it *ought* to go along with the Niobe. Don't you see, they are a pair; they are not meant to be separated. One is the *pendant* for the other. I should really want this in my room to keep the balance of ornament, don't you see? It would be very awkward to manage with the one alone."

I was so startled and troubled and amazed by this proposition, that I did not know how to speak. At last I suggested that Mr. Iredell had given it to me and would think his gift slighted.

"O no," said Olive eagerly. "He would not. He gave them to us, expecting that we would keep them together. They are a pair, and he just assigned one to you and one to me; but he thought we would keep them together. It is just the same, you know; only they stand in the same room and beautify each other."

"It would not do *me* much good, when I am hundreds of miles away,—" said I, ready to cry.

"Just the same good," said Olive. "You can think of it, and know it is yours, and enjoy it; and I will keep it safe for you; and in the mean time my room will not be one-sided. Mr. Iredell never thought we would separate them. I'll take good care of it for you."

And with that, rising, Olive did actually take in her arms my St. Cecilia and walked off with it out of the room. And I,—I dropped my work, and looked at the empty place on the table where the marble had been.

Was Olive right? Did Mr. Iredell indeed expect that his present to me should go to swell the train of Olive's possessions? Was it but a sham gift? Nothing in all my head or my heart said yea to that. I could not believe it. Nevertheless, a mingling of motives kept me from making violent opposition to Olive's action in the matter. The mere doubt, the mere possibility, threw a damper upon my joy. If that were possible, I should not care for the gift. On the other hand, Mr. Iredell might well think I had slighted both his kindness and the beautiful token of it. What weighed with me most, however, was Olive's evident uneasiness and anxiety to retain the marble in her own possession. That I found it difficult to withstand; doubted if I ought to withstand. So I sat and looked at the place where my marble had been; and felt beyond all reason desolate and forsaken

and forlorn. Almost I rose up to go after Olive and reclaim my treasure; but I could not do it. I sat alone and shed some heavy tears. I had, as she said, the memory of the St. Cecilia still with me; and it was comfort and reproach, but at the same time the sting of a keen pain. I wanted it so much! Well, it was gone.

The wedding took place next day. I went through it all, by dint of that mighty word, *must*. I have no doubt I looked and acted like other people, only I was perfectly quiet. As that is my way generally, of course it struck nobody. But the effort and strain to preserve that external calm, I think dulled and blurred my senses to all that was going on. I could ill give an account of it. I hardly discerned it. I know the guests came together, the minister was there, and the two, my sister and Mr. Iredell, came in and were married; but I did not see them. That is, I would not see them. I knew of course where they stood. And I did not need to look to see how Olive wore her bridal robes, for I had helped to dress her; and she was exceedingly handsome and very stately. How Mr. Iredell looked, I truly do not know. I was very glad when it was all over and they were gone, and I could plunge into the preparations for our own departure. I packed and packed, and would not think.

The day following the wedding saw grandmother and me on our travels again. All the way I put a ban upon thought. I was unable to read, though

I had a book; happily there was a good deal to do in taking care of grandma, getting her dinner and tea at the stopping places, keeping her feet warm and her shawls in order, and guarding her naps. We slept at New York, and the next day, late in the day, came to Chesterfield.

I had written and arranged, so there was a sleigh at the station to take us home. It was late, as I said, and the short winter day was already fading. Such a brilliant day! Snow lying deep everywhere; the valley one sweep of glittering white for miles and miles, and the hills dressed as they are in winter, with their snow and black tree stems and sheer falls of rock where the snow cannot lie, nor anything else. Everything in a sparkle and glitter under the level rays of the sinking sun, and the heaven over it all one deep, clear, unbroken blue. I never saw the earth more splendid, and never felt it more hard. All those round full notes of nature's harmonies clashed with flats and sharps in my own mental mood and made fearful discords. Nothing was in tune, except outside of me; and the perception how exquisite and perfect those external voices were, gave a bitter aggravation of the cry within. Storm and darkness would have been far more genial and have oppressed me far less. I suppose this is a common experience. And my native hills seemed to be laughing at getting me back again, and to draw together as if they were putting their barriers of rock and ice between me and whatever was warm, glad and gentle in the

world. I am glad that drive is over, and never to be gone through again.

I had written to Deacon and Mrs. Parsons and begged them to have the house opened and fires made for us. So I was not surprised to see smoke going up from the chimney. The sun had gone down behind the hills, when we stopped at the door, leaving a white glory in the western sky. So lofty, so pure, so utterly fair, that it smote me with blows of pain. It was so unlike me! I paused a half minute to look at it, before I went into the house. Desire, I said to myself, *that* is how you ought to be; and why are you not? But clear and still, sharp and cold, the night was settling down upon the valley, and I could not stand there; I went in, wishing now that grandma and I had been alone.

Our kind neighbours were very kind; they had not only lighted fires for us but got our supper; the kitchen was warm and the table was set, and Mrs. Parsons was helping to take off grandmother's wrappings. The deacon had resumed his seat at the corner of the hearth, where it was evident he had been before our arrival.

"Well, you hain't made a long stay this time," was his opening remark.

"No, it was impossible," said I.

"Don't see now, why," said the deacon. "So long as you was there once, you'd better ha' taken the good of it; and not have all that long tramp for nothin'."

"La, Deacon," said grandma, I'm glad to be home, for my part. There's nothin' like a good bed o' coals, where you kin toast your feet, like this, now. I've seen nothin' so good all the time I've been away."

"Why, don't Car'line have no fires in her house?" said the deacon.

"Some place, where you don't get sight of 'em. Fire there must be, or the rooms wouldn't be warm; and warm enough they be; but I pined for the sight o' a blaze. I think the sight o' the fire's more'n the feelin' of it. Deacon, I'm sick and tired o' grand doings!"

"Had so much of 'em since you've ben away?"

"Had nothin' else," said grandma, bending forward and holding her hands out to the blaze, in what was for her a great state of contentment. "Desire, do make a cup o' tea. I'm cryin' for't. I hain't had a real good cup neither, all the time I was in Philadelphy."

"Grandeur seems to be poor kind o' fare," remarked Deacon Parsons, with a twinkle in his kind eyes; while I threw off my things and made the tea.

"It's well enough, for them that like it," said grandma. "But you know, Deacon, use is second natur'. It's too late for me to begin to be fine at my time o' day. And you can't make as good a cup o' tea in a silver teapot as you kin in one o' pottery."

"That's so, I expect," said the deacon. "The ekalizing o' things in this life is striking. Car'line has the teapot, and you have the tea."

"Other things too," grandma went on. "Ham. La, Deacon Parsons, they don' know in Philadelphy what ham means. You know how our ham is, and I know how your'n is; tender, and juicy, and havin' a taste to it. You cure your hams with molasses, don't ye?"

"Allays. I can't make it out that sugar'll do as well."

"I know it won't. Well, whether they cure 'em with sugar or molasses, I don't know; but whichever 'tis, it don't do 'em no credit. Desire, ain't that tea ready? I declare, if there ain't some o Mrs. Parsons' scrapple; and I know what *that* is."

"I calculated you'd be hungry," said the good lady, who had been bustling about, too busy to talk, but now came in for her turn. "You look pretty smart, grandma; but Desire is kind o' tuckered out. Do eat some supper, dear! And tell us about the weddin'!"

"I s'pose all weddin's is pretty much the same," said the deacon, with that twinkle in his eye. He knew such a remark would bring the women out.

"If you think so, you never saw many," said grandma; pleased, I could see, with the distinctions of this one, in spite of her inveighing against grandeur.

"Well, she's married, and that's all there is about it," said the deacon. "'Tain't much odds whether it's in muslin or calico."

"Muslin!" echoed grandma. "Muslin, indeed!

White silk at three dollars the yard, and lace in her hair."

"O, that was very simple lace, grandma," I put in; "nothing costly."

"And flowers?" said the deacon's wife.

"Flowers enough to fill a bushel basket; the elegantest flowers you ever see; nothin' that grows here."

"Nothin' better'n roses, was there now?" said the deacon.

"Roses! there warn't a rose among them," grandma returned. "Mr. Iredell sent a great, grand bunch o' roses, white and red; and Olive looked 'em over, and concluded she hadn't room for 'em, with all the others; and left 'em lyin'."

"They were put in a vase with water, to keep them fresh, grandma."

"Who did it? Olive didn't."

"She had so much else to do—" I said.

"And what presents did she have? And was she married in church? And where is she goin' for her weddin' journey?" asked Mrs. Parsons. "And what sort of a man is her husband?"

So they had it all over again, all over; measured Olive's lace and paid for it, and almost cut and made her wedding dress. Questions and answers played back and forth over the whole ground; Olive's past, present and future; and then they came to mine.

"What'll you do when Desire goes, grandma?" the deacon asked.

"Desire ain't a goin'," grandma answered sharply.

"She's a likely gal to go," Deacon Parsons went on, with a smile at me. "As purty a gal as there is in twenty mile round! What's to hinder her?"

"Desire's got to take care o' me," said grandma, rising from the table.

"Might do that and be married too. Do you mean to keep her shut up here, where there ain't no white silk and lace and that, to keep her heart warm?"

"I don't mean to play Providence, and don't *you*, Deacon!" said my grandmother. "If there's a man comin' he'll come; but I ain't goin' to send out a crier after him. Small cause! White silk and lace indeed! Desire kin live 'thout white silk and lace; and for my part, I've got enough of 'em."

"So has Olive too, by what you say."

"Olive's married well," said grandma—in a satisfied tone.

"Who'd ha' thought it!" said Mrs. Parsons. "It's like a story in a book. Wall, there's no doubt but good looks doos go a great ways. Now, Mis' Burgoyne, kin I do anythin' more for ye, before we go?"

There was nothing more to be done, and our kind neighbours departed. By this time it was dark. I locked the door after them and came back to the kitchen.

"I'm glad they're gone, Desire!" cried grandma. "I'm just sick and tired o' seein' folks. Ever since we left Chesterfield, I've done nothin' but run my

tongue for some one or 'nother. Do fetch your book and let's have a read again. I do think weddin's are the poorest things goin'. I don't mind if I never see another one."

I brought my Bible and read; but after a chapter or two she declared herself tired and sleepy, and went to bed. I had been all day waiting and looking forward to this time, when I knew I should be alone. I made up the fire, put out the lamp, and sat down on the floor to think. A fight was to be fought, or at least a reckoning was to be taken; I must be at one with myself; and now was the time to see to it.

Still and alone! The fire snapped and flickered and blazed and glowed; its crackling and breathing were the only sounds to be heard in the utter stillness of the winter night. It was like a living presence with me; there was stimulus, and admonition, and comfort-giving in its company; and yet I was alone. I allowed myself to look at the fact now. Indeed it was necessary that I should look at it and at my whole situation and accept it, once and forever; take up my burden and march. I must look at it first and get it adjusted to my shoulders.

I do not think I am of an envious disposition naturally; nevertheless, that night the contrast between Olive's lot and my own was obstinately intrusive. It would be looked at. Everything around me urged and repeated it. I had just come from a plunge into that full life of ease and refinement,

which to the utmost seems to put mind and body at their best and give fairest chance for both to come to their best. I do not think that seeming is wholly true; nay, I am sure it is not. All the same, my whole nature responded to that life and yearned towards it. I like the delicate perfection of detail in all matters of personal surrounding; dress, table, furniture, service, habits of life. It suits me; I am well in it; life seems well ordered so. I had just had a dip in that pleasant wave of life; and now was landed high and dry on my old shore. Olive remained surrounded by such sweet circumstances; and I—? Turkey carpets for the one, and a thickly painted, bare, yellow, kitchen floor for the other. Delights of form and colour in all household details on the one hand; on the other, these rough wooden chairs, rush-bottomed or wooden-seated, painted chocolate colour, with impossible apples roughly portrayed on the upper slats of their backs. Look at my great stone hearth, of not very smooth slabs of limestone; the great deal table, the coarse whitewashed walls, the brown-painted wainscoting; and remember her dainty and elegant and convenient tables and chairs, and her picture-hung apartments, tapestried and curtained. Fancy went on and on, touching and tasting and feeling the contrasts, point by point; and all the while I knew I was only skirmishing with the accessories of the subject, and I must grapple with the heart of it. And so at last I did. I came up to it, face to face. I saw it and met it

full. Olive had sailed off upon the wide sea of life, with the love and the strength she wanted, to go with her; I was left behind, to hear the waves break upon the shore.

I spent some hard hours there upon the floor. I kept up the fire; for a while the fire gave me the only light and comfort I had. There was a fight to be fought with discontent; in other words, with my own will. For months this struggle had been before me, biding its time. Now its time was come. The enemy must be met and vanquished, or I must make shipwreck of faith. I could not live and do my work as a Christian with this unpeace in my heart. And as I never dreamed of making shipwreck of faith, I knew I must meet and vanquish the enemy. But meet him first. And I met him. I looked the whole thing squarely in the face; blinked nothing, disguised nothing, covered nothing. I looked at Olive's lot, and I looked at mine. O not at the furniture and the carpets now, but at the one thing which of all human things is the best; the love which one's own love meets, and which meets it; one's heart's counterpart. Olive had it, and in this case that meant that I should go without it to my dying day. Was I willing? could I accept my portion? could I say simply and heartily and finally, "Thy will be done?" Could I let the Lord arrange and decide and appoint for me, and be satisfied with his appointing?

He who has never fought such a fight does not know what it means. It comes to this;—"Child,

are you willing to die? Not to leave the world, but to stay in it and be dead?" If one can come to the point to say yes, then, indeed, there is a new life that wells up, filling the dried channels of the old, and even bringing forth new flowers upon the banks; but the thing is first, to be content that the old spring be dry. Not submissive, not resigned, but contentedly accepting. It is a battle over life and death; and I fought it that night. It is a dreadful battle, for it is not waged with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers unseen and intangible. The night drew on into the small hours, and it seemed to me that my head and my heart would break together.

I prayed, I need not say, I prayed earnestly; but I got no further. The work was as yet not done. It *must* be done before morning, I knew; now was my time. All the duties of all the hours must be met; duties to others and duties to myself; and I could not meet them, I could not meet one of them *well*, unless this matter were all right in my own heart. Not even the common duties of every day; not even the enjoyment of my Bible and prayer.

I turned to my Bible at last, in weary helplessness; for I was very weary and it was very late. By the light of the flames I needed no lamp or gas. I opened the book, and turned over leaf after leaf, vaguely looking for something I could lay hold of and hold fast by. I found it too. A word that I knew well enough *by sight* before; now the power of it flashed upon me.

"If ye shall ask anything in my name, *I will do it.*"

And all my life I had shoved in a "perhaps" there! All my life I had not believed the Lord's word. Perhaps because in all my life I had never needed it so. Now I clutched it, as a man in the water who cannot swim, lays hold of the rope thrown out to him. Well, I had done that once before. But now I threw myself confidingly upon it, upon the promise; I believed it; and with that, peace came to my heart. The work was done. That rope drew me out of the water.

There came a great lull upon the storm in my heart. Nothing was changed externally, but within the change was entire. I had been unwilling that the will of God should be done; now, the unwillingness was gone. I was content and quiet. Not joyful; that might never be; except with hidden joy in the grace and truth of my Deliverer; such an experience brings *him* near. Not joyful, but yet content. Content that all should be as it was; content to let the Lord bring further what he would; willing to sit on my bare floor, alone with Him. There came such a lull upon the storm, and with it such exhaustion, that I laid my head down upon my arms, on the chair, and went to sleep. There being nobody in the house to rouse me, I slept on; till my fire died out, and the dawn came; and was wakened at last when it was broad light by finding myself very cold.

March 15.

A LONG gap! So well filled up with work that writing was pushed to one side. I paid for that night's exposure with a bad cold, which however I took contentedly. I had gained what I could afford to pay for. When I got over that, I suppose I expected a quiet time, with a great deal of peace in it. Instead of such a time, now grandma fell ill.

Her illness was something serious. It began with a cold, and took an inflamed and alarming type. She is better now, but feeble and very restless, making demands upon me every other minute for one thing or another. Happily she lies in a room off the kitchen, so that I can hear her when she speaks, if I am busy there; and so can as nearly as possible be in two places at once. This is the way of things at present.

I am in the kitchen, cutting up beef to make beef tea. I hear my name called.

"Desire, that light's too bright in my eyes."

"Yes, grandma; the sun has got round." I arrange the curtain.

"Are those oranges all gone?"

"O no. Do you want one?"

"I should like just a bit."

For Olive, or somebody, has sent us a great crate of Havana oranges, large and sweet and delicious. I prepare one as grandma likes to have it, taking off the rind and dividing the lobes, ready to be swal

lowed. She takes perhaps two bits, and pushes the plate away.

"I don't want no more. Desire, my pillers are no use to me."

"What's the matter with them?"

"Don't you see? My head goes right down in 'em. I do hate pillers that can't hold up. These were stuffed full, once."

"They have been used a long while. I suppose they have grown soft." And as I speak, I shake up the pillows and make the most of them that can be made.

"Shall I bring you another one?"

"Another what?"

"Another pillow, to raise your head higher."

"Mercy, no! If three of 'em make such a pile, what would four do? I might as well put a feather bed under my head. Did you get a letter from Olive to-day?"

"No, grandma."

"We ain't had one for a week. She don't hurry herself."

"She never was much of a writer, you know."

"Things are different. She had ought to write to us now, to let us know that the world don't stand still,—if it don't, that is. Seems to me it do."

"Lying here, you cannot see it move much, can you?"

"Can you, Desire, out there in the kitchen?"

"Not much. *I* move a little."

"Humph!" said grandma to this. "Olive had ought to be here herself."

"How can she? Olive is not her own mistress now."

"Whose mistress is she then? Not that man's, if I know him. She has got to do what somebody else says, for the first time in her life; and why he don't tell her to come here and help you, I don't see."

"I do not want help, grandma."

"You're growin' thin and meek-lookin'."

"Well, that is no harm," said I laughing.

"Olive never was meek," she went on, "and she never will be. 'Tain't her natur'. What is she doin', all this while?"

"You know, she says she is enjoying herself; hearing a great deal of music, and seeing a good many agreeable people. Shall I leave you now and finish preparing your beef tea?"

"Olive never cared for company. She said it was too much bother."

"It is no bother now. You know she has servants to do everything for her."

"She might send you a couple."

"I dare say they would not come," said I, smiling again at the idea. "Now, grandma, I must just finish cutting up that beef—"

"What for?"

"Beef tea."

"I don't want no more."

"But you need it. You must take it, till you have more appetite. And so I must make it."

"I'll tell you what I could eat; a roast potato."

"Very well. You shall have it."

I slip away and finish putting my beef in the bottle. There comes another call.

"Desire—the quilt is all slipped down on one side."

I straighten things.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Four o'clock."

"Only four! The days are growin' so long agin. I'm tired to death lyin' here and doin' nothin'."

"Shall I come and read to you presently?"

"I don't believe I could listen, till I get a nap. My eyes are shuttin' up of themselves."

"Then let them be shut, and take a sleep; you will feel brighter after it."

"I don't believe I kin sleep, till I have something to eat. I have such a *gone* feelin'. The minute I try to go to sleep, I can't do it."

I bring her some of the despised beef tea; she takes two teaspoonfuls; refuses more; and lets her poor eyes close for a little. Then is my time. I fly round the house, noiselessly; see to the beef tea; put on the kettle; put down the potato; strain the milk, skim the cream, set the table for my own supper, brush up the floor, and make sponge for bread The boy who does the charing for me, brings in wood for the night, and water; and his supper has to be made ready and given him. By this time, and before this time, grandma is calling for me again,

"Desire, it's quite dark; ain't I goin' to have no tea to-night?"

"What will you have, grandma? An egg?"

"No. I'm sick and tired of eggs."

"Porridge?"

"Desire, whatever else you do, don't never offer to a sick person, that hain't got an appetite, any o' them tasteless kind o' things. They're well enough for folks that only wants to swaller; but I ain't in that state."

"What then, grandma? just your potato?"

'Could you do me a little bit o' fish?"

"Codfish? yes, certainly. With hot water?"

"Roast it first, wrapped up in brown paper and vinegar—"

"I know."

"Then pick it up—"

"I know, grandma."

"Pick it up *fine*,—don't chop it, Desire; pick it up fine; and then, what will you do?"

"Pour boiling water over it."

"And then what next?"

"Turn the water off and pour on some more. And again, if necessary."

"But leave it salt *enough*. I don't want no tasteless stuff. Then have some hot toast and pour it over, with pepper and butter. I think I could eat that. I don't want no potato."

It took a while to make ready; but she *did* eat and enjoy it, with her tea and bread and butter. She made quite a comfortable meal. I had taken

my own by the way; and when she was refreshed, and I had removed her tray, she was ready for reading and I was ready to read.

"What are you goin' to give me to-night, Desire?"

"Something I have been thinking of all day, grandma. The Christian's dwelling-place."

"What's that? Well, go on; and I'll find out."

Now it had grown to be quite our custom to make the reading alternate with talk. So I read one passage, and stopped, to let her lead the conversation.

"'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.'" Deut. xxxiii. 12.

"That's very comfortin' for them as kin lay hold of it,—" said grandmother after a pause.

"Then for you, grandma?"

"I'm not in that description—'the beloved of the Lord.' I don't feel as it belongs to me."

"Why not?"

"He can't love sich a poor cretur'," said grandma humbly. I never heard her speak so humbly.

"The dear Lord loves all his people," I said.

"But, Desire, the rest don't fit. I never dwelled *so*, in his arms like, all the day long;—nor any part o' the day. I never did; and I don't b'lieve no one ever did; not all the day long."

"But here is the promise, grandma."

"Why, child, earth would be a kind o' heaven, if it came to that."

"Well, grandma, I guess the Lord means it should be, for them that love him."

"There ain't many as realizes it, then, if *that's* what the Christian life is. An' I allays heerd it was a fight. It's been a fight to me."

"Suppose I go on, and see what comes next. But isn't this better than an everlasting struggle? this dwelling in the Lord's own presence, in the Lord's own protecting shelter, from the storm, and from the heat of the day? and from enemies?"

"Go on, child."

"'Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?'"—Ps. xv. 1.

"Ay," said grandma; "that's the question. Now go on and answer it."

"'He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.'"

"What's that?" she asked quickly. "What's the odds, whether you speak it in your heart or with your tongue?"

"I suppose this means freedom from all deceit and even a shadow of untruth in our very thoughts; what the Bible calls 'without guile'; a heart that answers to the Lord as simply as the Lord speaks to it."

"La, child, there ain't no sich a heart."

"I think there must be, grandmother."

"And the Lord won't let no other dwell with him? There's a many wants mercy, then. Desire, that's very discouragin'."

"O no, grandmother—I don't think so. Don't

you remember—'Faithful is he that calleth you, *who also will do it.*' But let me go a little further.

"'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'"—Ps. xxiii. 6.

"That's in heaven," said grandma.

"Yes, but also, you know, grandmother, the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, the Temple, was the image and symbol of the unseen courts of the Lord; and his presence was there, and he met his people there; and David was thinking of the secret presence of the Lord, whether on earth or heaven, I think. For in the twenty-seventh Psalm he says again—

"'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.'

"It is the secret presence of the Lord, in which David wanted to dwell and in which he would be hid. It is the same as 'dwelling all day between his shoulders.'"

And my eyes filled with glad tears; for I had reached that shelter and knew that the curtains of that pavilion were dropped around me. Grandma was silent a good while.

"That ain't much like the common sort o' experience," she remarked then.

"No--" said I.

"How many folks, now, do you s'pose has it like that?"

"Grandma, that question does not trouble me. The thing is, to have it myself."

"Ain't that kind o' selfish?"

"I hope not."

"'Seems to me 'tis."

"Why?"

"You had ought to care whether other folks is happy or no."

"O I do!" I cried. "And I will do all I can,—*all I can*, grandma, to bring them to be as happy as myself."

"You've got it, then?" she said with a sharp turn of her head towards me. I bent over and kissed her.

"Thank the Lord, yes!" I said.

She was silent again a while, and a good deal moved, I saw. Then she said,—

"What do you mean by sayin' you'll do all you kin to bring other folks over?"

"All I can"—I repeated gravely.

"At that, you might go out and preach in the road and tell all that come by."

"Do you think that would be the best way?"

"I didn't know but *you* might."

"If I did, grandma, I would do it. I will do the best I know, and all I know."

"Are you beginnin' with me?" said grandmother. "Well, go on, child." But I saw her now and then

move her wrinkled hand furtively to her old eyes; and it went all through and through my heart.

"'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High'—that is, in the secret of his presence —'shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' Ps. xci. 1.

"And then again,

"'Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.'—Ps. xc. 1.

"You see, it is the general experience of the Lord's true people. And then it comes to the special designation of Christ.

"'A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.'—Is. xxxii. 2.

"And then,—

"'He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, *dwelleth in me*, and I in him.'"

"That's very mysterious," said grandma.

"O no!" I returned. "How can it be? Anybody whose life and whose daily food Christ is, naturally finds his daily dwelling in him. That is not mystery, grandma, but blessed fact. So he says, in another place,

"'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them

into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.'—John xv. 4–7.

"'And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.'" I John ii. 28.

I was silent, filled with a great joy in my heart, for a little while; and then granny said,

"I guess you'd better go down and preach to Deacon Saddler's wife."

"What's the matter with her?"

"Why do tell, child, where's your ears! Didn't you hear what's come over her? Lottie Lamson was tellin' me."

"I was up stairs."

"Well, the whole of her seven's down with one thing or another, measles and whoopin' cough. How she's kept 'em till now and nary one of 'em to have had it, I don' know; but there 'tis; and the whole seven of 'em. It wouldn't be possible for another woman in Chesterfield to have sich luck."

"Don't talk of luck, grandmother. Whom has she got to help her?"

"More'n I know, child; and I know all Lottie knows."

"I will go down and see her to-morrow."

Which purpose I carried out the next day, as soon as I had made matters straight at home and could leave granny comfortable. It was softly snowing;

softly but thick; the flakes fell in a dense shower around me, piled themselves up on head and shoulders, and clung to the folds of my dress wherever they could; it was so still that they were not dislodged by my quiet movements. I like such a day. The air was delicious, with a kind of spicy life to it, like the freshness which snow gives to water; and through the thick white veil of the falling shower the hills shewed their outlines more or less plainly; more *and* less; here a bold feature of the mountain coming into prominence, and there the receding hollows and hill-sides all covered and half obliterated. No fear of meeting any one; I had the whole outside world to myself; and there is something fine in that sense of possession. Walking was not just easy, the soft white carpet had already such a pile to it; but that did not matter to me. I had been shut up a good deal lately; and the outer air and the stir of getting through the snow were a very grateful excitement. So I was well refreshed by the time I turned in at Mrs. Saddler's gate. Poor Mrs. Saddler! nothing ever goes easily with her. And how long was it since I had thought that nothing went well with Desire Burgoyne? I had learned better now, and I went singing a psalm in my heart as I went up to the door. No need to knock; there might be nobody to answer the knock. I lifted the latch softly and went in.

Nobody to be seen. An empty kitchen, a cold fireplace; the table and dishes standing as the dea-

con had left them after his dinner; at least I saw only one cup and plate, and guessed they must have been for the use of the master of the house. I made my way up stairs, and hearing Mrs. Saddler's voice, turned in at the door on my right. For there was a door, leading to a bedroom, on each side of the little yard-square landing place at the head of the stairs. I found Mrs. Saddler with a child in her arms; in the bed lay two more sick-looking little faces, which gazed at me stupidly. Mrs. Saddler uttered my name with an accent of glad surprise.

"Yes," said I. "We heard you had trouble here; how is it? Things look as if it was true."

"Trouble?" said the poor woman, and she began to cry,—"there ain't nothin' *but* trouble in this world."

"Hardly so bad as that, is it?" I returned. "Are you *all* sick?"

"Every soul o' the lot!" said the mother, whimpering; "first Jacob was tuck down, and then Sally, and then the hull o' the rest o' 'em tumbled into bed together. I never see sich a time as Iv'e had; never; in all my days! The hull seven of 'em to once!"

"How came it none of 'em ever took the measles before? it has been in Chesterfield often."

"That's so," said Mrs. Saddler wiping her wet cheeks; "and I s'pose I hadn't oughter ha' kep' 'em so keerful as I did; but I kep' 'em so keerful. 'Lias, he cast it up to me consid'able that I was

too keerful; but there!—a man don' know what 'tis, fust to have children and then to rear 'em. He said, 'Lias said, I was puttin' myself in place o' Providence; and he tells me, and says he, 'it won't do, mother; it's a plan as you kint carry through;' and now it's come, he ain't no more help than a baby. Don't you never git married, Desire; you'll rue the day."

"Have you no one to help you, with all these children?"

"Ain't it queer how things turns out sometimes! You'd think, in all the place there'd be some un. And there ain't a soul. Not a livin' soul. I've my two hands, and that's all I have; and when the seven of 'em all want drink to once, I don' know which way's the jug handle."

"But what's the matter with all the people?"

"Mis' Chan'ler's got sickness to hum. Mis' Binnacle's too fur, and has her house and her man to see to. Well she has; and I don't cast it up to her. Mis' Parsons ain't strong. Amandy Barry's laid up with sore throat; and Lottie Lamson has to attend to her own folks, that want her, I expect. What is it?" said Mrs. Saddler raising her voice to reach the ears of some one in the other room,—"O yes, I am comin'. Stop your yellin', I'm a comin', as fast as ever I kin lay the baby down—"

"Don't lay him down," said I. "I will go and see what is wanted."

A good deal was wanted, as I already half anticipated. Two beds held two children apiece; the

oldest of the seven was but twelve years old. Poor little heads, looking wan and sickly, were raised to look at me as I went in, and weak voices demanded "drink." I satisfied that demand; and then went round the room putting in some sort of order the various irregularities which were enough to reduce the soul of an orderly woman to despair. Mrs. Saddler was never an orderly woman. Clothes lay on the floor where they had been thrown down days ago; the beds were in every state of disarrangement; cups and dishes had accumulated in unintelligible confusion; basins and pitchers were long unattended to; and worse than all, the air of the room, kept close shut up and very warm from the wood stove, was exceedingly foul. I straightened the beds, emptied the basins, filled the pitchers, folded up the clothes, and carried away the useless dishes; all the while meditating how I could attack the air. At Mrs. Bowdoin's I had read and studied Florence Nightingale's "Notes on Nursing," and so I knew a little what to do. Then I went into the other room to Mrs. Saddler.

"I am coming to help you," said I.

"You? you blessed cretur!" said Mrs. Saddler bursting into tears again. "I'd jest as lieves have you as the angel Gabriel! But your granny wants you, Desire."

"I'll get Cecilia Thorax or Miss Polly Binninger, to stay with her. I've had the measles, but Cecilia's little brothers and sisters haven't; so she couldn't come here; but she can stay with grandmother.

I'll come, Mrs. Saddler; but I am going to make one condition."

"Condition?" said the good woman bewildered. "What's it?"

"I want to give those children in the other room some fresh air."

"Air?" said Mrs. Saddler again. "What's the matter with the air?"

"It's very bad."

"What do you want to do?"

"Open the windows."

Mrs. Saddler looked frightened out of her wits.

"You musn't, Desire! you'll kill 'em all. It 'ud strike in. They'd catch cold. That was the way with Mis' Barry's boy—he—"

"I will not let them take cold. I will cover them well up, and just let the fresh air in. I am afraid indeed they will suffer for it, if I do not. The greatest nurse in the world says that people do not take cold in bed, if they are properly covered up."

But my arguing could not avail. I was obliged to waive my condition. I went home and made the necessary arrangements, called at Mrs. Thorax's house and engaged Cecilia to take my place at home; and by evening was installed at the deacon's. I sent Mrs. Saddler down to get the supper and have so much change as that would give her; and I found it easy to content the children, whose weariness was glad of a new face in the sick room. Moreover I managed surreptitiously to get a little of the sweet snowy outer air into the rooms, by

covering the young ones up and telling them a story to keep their heads under the bedclothes for a few minutes while I opened a window. When Mrs. Saddler came up stairs again, things wore a much better aspect; some of the children were sleeping, the others quiet; and the air was breathable. Therefore I was somewhat surprised to see Mrs. Saddler sit down and begin to cry.

"What's the matter?" said I. "Things are going on as well as possible."

"Oh I'm jes' tuckered out! And things never doos go well in this house; and 'Lias, he casts it up to me that it's my fault; and I'm tired o' livin'. Could I help 'em gittin' it?"

"Certainly not."

"'Lias, he says I'm too keerful, and ef I wouldn't be so confounded keerful—that's jes' what he said, —some on 'em'd ha' had it before, and things wouldn't come all in a heap. I don't allow that a man as is a deacon in the church had ought to let himself use sich words; it's very nigh swearin'; and so I told him. An' he don't keer what I say."

"But the children are doing very well, Mrs. Saddler; and you mustn't mind a little word of the deacon. Perhaps he was tired too."

"I don't see with what. La, Desire! a man goes out to his work, an' he comes in an' sits down, an' calls to the women folks for what he wants; an' his work's done; an' he has his supper 'thout gettin' it; an' he kin find time to look round him an' see ef anythin's wrong; an' ef there is,

you'll hear of it, an' ef there ain't, it's no thanks to you. There mostly *is*, in my house, and I hear of it from mornin' till night. Seems to me, folks' lives is very unekal. Mis' Binnacle don't hev the worry I do, and *you* don't. You're young yet; mebbe you will; but there's Olive. Look at Olive! Made a grand match, an' never need turn her hand to anythin', nor do what she don't want to. *She*'ll never hev seven children; that's for me, who hain't got anythin' but my two hands to help me take keer of 'em."

"Come," said I, "you've got me. I'll help you. And, Mrs. Saddler, do you believe that God loves his children?"

At which she began to cry worse than ever.

"O Desire! I don't know what I b'lieve! I can't make out so many things goin' contráry."

"Don't you know what the Bible says?"

"I kin skeerce git time to read the Bible. You wouldn't, if you had seven pullin' at you day and night, and another waitin' till you got through with the seven, that you might attend to *him*."

"Listen, then. The Bible says, 'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him.'—"

"O hush, Desire!" said the poor woman. "I ain't the 'beloved of the Lord.' I wish't I was; but I'm fur out!"

"Why?"

"I don' know!"

She was sobbing softly, and I waited a little.

"It's good to be the 'beloved of the Lord,' and

to know it; and the place of safety by him, where his beloved dwell, is a good place,"—I said gently.

"Good for you—" returned Mrs. Saddler.

"And surely good for you."

"'Tain't for me."

"Why not?"

"'Cause," said she sobbing violently, "I ain't the —beloved—of the—Lord."

"I think," said I presently, "if you knew yourself *there*, in that place of safety, all these things would not trouble you so much. You would feel the love of Jesus, and just leave them all to him."

"Do you mean, I wouldn't care whether my children live or die?" she asked, flaring up again.

"Of course you would care; but, dear Mrs. Saddler, if you knew that love, you could trust the Lord, and be willing to leave them and everything in his hand. And in his hand no harm could come to you or to them."

"It wouldn't keep 'em from dyin'. There's been two took from me a'ready."

"And is that *harm?*" I asked.

"Dyin'?"

"Yes. I mean, dying and going to be with Christ, as the little children do. Is that harm?"

"Ain't it harm to me, to have to do 'thout 'em?"

"The Bible says, 'there shall no evil happen to the just.'"

"What do you call it then, Desire? Ain't it evil, to have all my seven down to once with the measles, and nary soul to help?"

"I am here."

"Yes, you are here; and how you come to be here, I don't see."

"The Lord sent me, to be with you, and help you, and comfort you."

"Did he tell you to come?" said she opening her eyes.

"Certainly."

"To help me?"

"Certainly."

"What fur?"

"What could it be, but because he loves you?'

"But then, Desire," said she, tears dropping again, "why couldn't he keep 'em from gittin' sick?"

"Suppose I cannot tell, and you cannot tell. Cannot you trust him, that he has some good reasons? Take the love and the care, and trust him for what is behind."

"Be you content," said she suddenly, "that Olive should have all the play, and you all the work?"

"Quite content."

"An' you wouldn't alter it if you could?"

"I would not put out a finger to change anything, of all the Lord's dealings with me. I am sure they are all good. I am quite content."

She looked hard at me, made a perplexed remark about things being so "unekal"; and then we were both called to attend to the children. It was a watchful night, though hardly anxious; I saw no

reason for anxiety; but the seven children certainly kept us two women busy. And not that night only. The day and the night that followed, and several nights and days thereafter, we both had as much to do as we could do. But the seven went on well; and from time to time I got a chance to read the Bible, or repeat from it, to Mrs. Saddler; at night, when the children were sleeping; by day in the lulls of our activity; though I confess daylight left us little chance for such quiet work. For then there was the house to be taken care of, as well as the two sick rooms in it; and there was Deacon Saddler, who had also some claims to attention. He is a grave, silent, rather stern man, I fancy; not precisely of a quiet temper.

"Well, Desire," he broke out the last morning of my stay, as I was giving him his breakfast, "you *hev* been an angel in this 'ere house."

"O no," said I brightly; "I am only one of the Lord's servants. I am a fellow-servant of the angels, if you please. I like to think that."

"How so?" said he judicially.

"You know, the angel that John saw in his vision said he was John's fellow-servant; so I suppose he must be mine;—he and the rest of them."

"John was an apostle." . . .

"The angel wasn't."

"No, but—"

"We are all servants together, the earthly and the heavenly; and doing the same work."

"How kin you be so sure of that?" said the deacon, sitting back and regarding me, I felt, rather curiously. For my part, I smiled at him.

"Why, Deacon," said I, "isn't it written of the angels that they are 'ministers of his, that do his pleasure'?"

He nodded. "Sartain; in the one hundred and third Psalm it is."

"Well,—that describes me too."

He had been tilting his chair back on two legs; now he brought it down, and sitting bolt upright asked me if I meant to assert that I did the Lord's pleasure?

"Why, yes," said I; "so far as I know it."

"There ain't a just man livin', that doeth good and sinneth not," said he.

"That describes me accurately, as I am in myself and without Christ," I rejoined. "But now, please, look at the epistle of John, third chapter, twenty-second verse. That is my experience too, by faith in him."

The deacon opened his Bible, found the place, wrinkled his forehead tremendously over it, studied the words up and down, finally pushed the book from him.

"Where did you git that experience?" said he.

Where did I get it? Ah, I could not tell him. I had got it in the fire and the flood, through which alone, it seemed to me, I had escaped from Egypt and reached the free ground of Christ's full salvation. Other people, I suppose, may come to it an-

other way; for me, it was through death to life. And in a certain sense, so, I apprehend, it must be for all.

I was a week or two with Mrs. Saddler; and left her and her large family in a fair way to comfort again. That was three evenings ago. As I walked home, towards evening, there was a spicy scent of spring in the air; and the softened light also told of softer days coming. Spring again! with Olive gone, and grandmother and me alone, and the hills of Chesterfield marking out plainly enough the limits of *my* world. But now I am content. I thought as I walked along through the Spring promise,—*Nothing can take Christ from me!*

Philadelphia, Dec. 10, 18—.

OLIVE wrote begging me to come and be with her for a while; she said she was not well. I was in doubt what to do; for she did not ask me to bring grandmother; however, grandmother herself settled the question. "Go of course," she said; "and let Cousin Hildreth come and stay with me. She'll be glad o' the chance."

I objected, that I was afraid Arethusa Hildreth would not make her comfortable; but all my objections were ruled out. Olive's letter was very pressing. I pondered the matter and prayed over it, and finally thought I ought to go. It was not ex-

actly pleasure to me; I took it as work. So I left grandma in Arethusa's care and committed myself to the railway again.

My sister's carriage came for me, but there was nobody in it. I knew Mr. Iredell was living in the city, and that a short drive therefore would bring me to my journey's end. My breath came a little hurriedly and oppressed. How would everything be? How should I manage to behave myself as a good sister to both the people whom I had known under such different circumstances? Why should Olive want me? and how would Mr. Iredell like my being there? They two must be sufficient for each other; and Olive was not unwell enough to need a nurse; at least she did not say so. I could not forecast anything. I tried to fix my mind on those model words of Christ,—"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

The carriage stopped before a house evidently old, I thought, and the door flew open almost before I could knock. I entered a wide hall; wide and old-fashioned; carpeted and warmed, and furnished with tall backed dark chairs and settees and several spindle-legged tables. Pictures hung on the walls; the whole effect was of quaint, ancient respectability. Crossing the hall towards the stairs, for I was told my sister was in her room and begged me to come to her there, a door opened at one side, and Mr. Iredell met me.

"So you are come!" said he cordially. "I am very glad. Olive has been longing for you."

I breathed freer. The encounter was over. Answer I think I made none. Mr. Iredell told a servant to shew me the way, and went back to the room he had come from. Through the half open door I caught the shine of firelight upon dark, warm-coloured furniture; the stairway and passages as I went up were a continuation of the same soft, old-fashioned luxury. It flitted across my brain as I went, how the frost snapped and bit one's face and fingers on the staircase and in the hall at Chesterfield; and I thought, surely Olive ought to be satisfied with one side of her lot. Then I came to her room.

There was a fire there too, and Olive rose from a soft lounge to meet me. I looked for traces of illness in her face, but did not find them. Olive looked a little pale, perhaps, like a person too much housed; in another respect her face struck me. It was not as bright as I had expected to see it; in fact I had seen it brighter. I sat down, looking at her.

"Take off your things, Desire. You are come to stay with me, and I don't want to see you with your bonnet on. That's a very old bonnet, by the by; don't I remember it?"

"I dare say you do," said I smiling; "you have seen it often enough."

"You shall have a new one. Lay your things off there; you shall go to your room afterwards. Did you see anybody down stairs?"

"Anybody? I saw Mr. Iredell."

"Did he go for you?"

"O no. I saw him a moment in the hall."

"How do you like the house?"

"Lovely! just what delights me. Comfortable, and roomy, and quaint. At least, so it seems to me. But your room is not like the rest."

Truly it was not. Entering it, I had come into a different world. Curtains of rose-coloured damask, windows still further shaded with thick lace draperies; a carpet with flowers on a white ground, a rug which displayed a bunch of roses; bright chintz furniture which quite toned down some of the same old dark wood chairs and tables I had seen below in the hall; a basket of flowers on one table, writing materials on another, books and pictures on a third, bits of *biscuit*, bits of old china, bits of bronze. I looked for my St. Cecilia and the Niobe, but they were not there. A beautiful affghan lay upon the lounge from which Olive had risen, and on a little tripod beside it a cup which seemed to have held chocolate. Olive threw herself down on her cushions again and made me take an easy chair.

"No," she said, answering my remark. "I was determined to have something bright about me. The whole house is old, and everything in it is old. It has been in the family for ever. Till last year it was inhabited by two old aunts of Mr. Iredell; just suited them, I should think; now they have gone west to live with a son of one of 'em, who has got a place there in some business. That was no rea-

son, *I* think, why we should occupy it; but Mr. Iredell thought differently."

I cannot express how strange this speech was in my ears.

"You have not lived at the Mansion at all?"

"I should think not! Out of the world. No, I wanted to be in the city, and Mr. Iredell liked it too; only he liked this old house, and I didn't. So I determined I would let the light into one room of it. Don't you like my taste?"

"Olive, I have a fancy for old-fashioned things, I believe."

"You are so old-fashioned yourself. I hear you have taken up the trade of sick nurse at home."

"No," said I; "not at all; only upon occasion."

"When there is somebody sick, I suppose that means," Olive said deridingly. "There is no sense in it, Desire! Of course you get popularity by it; but it's absurd. People must take care of their own sick; but to take care of all the world—That's Mr. Iredell's idea!"

"Well, what do we live for, Olive?"

"Live for?" she echoed. "I don't know what *you* live for. *I* try to get some good out of life."

"How do you succeed?"

"I should succeed, if my husband would think I do."

"Or, perhaps, if you would think as he does?"

"Nonsense, Desire! As I said, you may get popularity by it; I have heard your praises sung, up

and down; but it don't pay. You will find it don't pay. People thank you at the minute, and forget you afterwards."

"If you mean that popularity don't pay, I perfectly agree with you. 'They have their reward,' —is a very miserable sentence."

"What do you do it for then?"

"Do what?"

"Make yourself everybody's servant. First Mrs. Saddler's; and then when Mr. Binnacle broke his leg; and then when the Lansoms got into trouble."

"I did not do much for the Lansoms."

"Only were there night and day. I heard all about it."

"Well, Olive, if you had seen the distress they were in, you would not have wondered at my trying to help them."

"What could you do?"

"Stand by, when everybody else fell away; and so encourage them to think there is one other Friend who never fails."

"Job Lansom was guilty of some rascality, wasn't he?"

"Yes. Very disgraceful. At college, too. He is in prison for it."

"Well, Desire, I think guilt *ought* to suffer."

"Then what will become of you and me, sister? if we are to have our deserts?"

I do not know how Olive would have answered. At that moment came an announcement that lunch was ready; and she rose up.

"You seem to have had your lunch," I said, remarking the empty cup.

"O no! That was my breakfast," she replied.

"Your breakfast! But when then did you take it?"

"Awhile ago. I was a little late to-day. I usually breakfast about eleven."

"Breakfast at eleven! When do you get up?"

"O, time enough to dress before breakfast," she said with a languid smile. "I believe in taking care of myself, Desire; something that you leave quite out of consideration. People grow old twice as fast, who do not give themselves rest enough. It agrees with me to sleep late."

"Do you find yourself in better condition than when you used to rise at five o'clock?"

"Don't speak of it!" said Olive. "It makes me shudder only to think of such a thing."

"You wrote me that you were not well."

"I am not. That is why I am taking care."

"What ails you?"

"The doctor says my lungs are out of order. I think myself it is my heart."

"And when does Mr. Iredell take *his* breakfast?"

"I don't know! At some dreadful early hour. It is against his principles, I believe, to take care of himself. That is one of the points we are not agreed upon."

"Are there many such points?" I asked, full of wondering astonishment. Olive, while these words were exchanged, had been standing before a cheval

glass, laying a bit of lace over her smooth hair, and wrapping a fleecy shawl round her shoulders. She turned to me now, saying calmly that no two people ever thought alike on all subjects, and leading the way to go down stairs. I looked at my dusty travelling dress, and suggested that some change might be desirable there.

"O never mind," said Olive. "I will excuse you; and Mr. Iredell never knows what anybody has on." And she swept on before me and down the stairs. I followed, in a maze.

The room to which she led me now was, to my eyes, something delicious. Rather low, dark wainscoted, dark carpeted, with more of the old dark furniture; and pictures on the walls, the frames of which likewise shewed advanced age; for the carving of them was covered with gilding quite bronzed by time. In the midst of all this, a table bright with glass and silver and damask. The contrast was very pretty; and a glowing fire of cannel coal harmonized the whole. Mr. Iredell was there before us; his eye glanced from me to Olive; I did not feel at all sure that it took no notice. All my previous observation of it assured me that it did.

He made kind inquiries about my fatigue and want of refreshment, and took kind care about supplying the latter; kind and grave. He seemed to me more grave than of old; even as he had seemed to me a year ago when I met him for a moment at the Chesterfield station. So it was not Olive that

had wrought the change, if change there were. I could not help the feeling that there was a change. It appeared equally in his manner towards his wife, I thought.

"Desire wants to know what time you take breakfast, Mr. Iredell," Olive said. "She thinks I neglect you."

"Or that I neglect you," said he. "Well, she is come now, to make up all deficiencies."

"Do you expect me to do *that?*" I asked, smiling.

"You think it is too much to ask of anybody?" said he. "Perhaps."

"I hope you do not mean to ask her to come down to breakfast at your unearthly hours," Olive remarked,—"by way of supplying my deficiencies?"

"I should be very deficient myself in hospitality if I did not ask her. Perhaps she would not be willing to cut off such a large slice of her day as you do, and throw it behind her."

"Do you think I could do anything better with it?" said Olive, laying down her knife and fork and looking over the table at him. He hesitated, did not immediately raise his eyes; then looked up, met hers with a very sweet smile and said,

"Yes."

"I cannot get you to believe what the doctor says," returned Olive.

"May be true or may not be true. I believe honestly, Olive, there is no better way to lengthen one's life than by making a proper use of it."

"What is a 'proper' use of it?"

"The proper use of anything, is that use for which it was made, or given."

"And you think my life was given me, for what?"

"I do not 'think' about it," said he smiling again, "I know."

"What?" Olive was a little impatient.

"I know the command is—'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'"

"Mr. Iredell," said Olive, again laying down her knife and fork and speaking impressively, "such a rule, as you would interpret it, would condemn me to a life of absolute and incessant drudgery!"

"It has not that effect upon me," said he lightly. "Pray how would *you* interpret the rule?"

"In reason."

"That is—?"

"I can't tell! I mean, *in reason.* I suppose one should help other people as far as one can without hurting oneself. I do not think one is called upon to do that."

"What is 'hurting yourself,' Olive?" he asked gently but steadily. "The apostle John says 'we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.'"

"Do you take that literally?"

"How else?"

"But that is unreasonable. If I lay down my life, I can do no more with it, for myself or anybody."

"You would not need," said Mr. Iredell. "It is written, 'He that loseth his life for my sake *shall*

find it.' And when Christ says that, it means,—all that you and I want."

"But,"—I ventured,—"to come to that point, of losing one's life, is not easy."

"No—" said Mr. Iredell, turning his eyes upon me.

"Do you think everybody understands it?"

"No!"

"You mean that I don't?" said Olive. "It is easy enough to understand, I should think,—in times of persecution."

"Yes," said her husband; "it is easy enough then. The difficulty is to understand it and to come up to it *now*, in times when there is no active persecution, and the issue is not presented so sharp and plain before the sense."

"How can one lose one's life without losing it?"

"Ay," said Mr. Iredell with a half smile; "it is one of the paradoxes of religion. What are you going to do with Desire to-day?"

"Nothing. Look at her, and see her looking at me."

"Very well. Will you be well enough to go and hear Ole Bull this evening?"

"O yes."

"And Desire not too tired?"

"O no!" said I. *Too tired!* Such a prospect would have roused me from the last depths of fatigue. So after lunch Olive and I went up stairs.

"There," said Olive as we went, "that's inconsistent. What business have we, on Mr. Iredell's prin-

ciples, to go and hear a man play the violin? or do anything else for pleasure? That is the way with your extravagant people, they cannot keep consistent with themselves. Right upon all that talk, he asks us if we will go and hear Ole Bull!"

I hesitated whether to answer, and concluded it was better not. *I* was in no confusion and under no difficulty. The talk, to me, had been like a refreshing draught of cold water; it was like other talks I remembered, in which the same and kindred truths had been set forth in their native strength and simplicity, without tampering or alloy; and it did my heart good. But Olive's part in the conversation surprised me. Truly it was like the Olive I had known; but how any one could live a year with Mr. Iredell and not be more like him, was to me a marvel and a mystery.

Dec. 11.

WE went to the concert of course. I cannot describe what a peculiar impression the whole evening made upon me, coming after these many months of seclusion in Chesterfield valley and the simple routine of my life there. Desire Burgoyne, wrapped up in some of Olive's furry wrappings, rolling smoothly along through the streets in a carriage, going to hear Ole Bull! The feeling of identity gets uncertain and shaky with such sharp changes. I watched the gas lights in

the streets, as we rolled past; the flitting dark figures on the sidewalks, each going its several way, and making in the aggregate such a stream of human activity; the gay shows in the shop windows sometimes, then the still lines of houses with no life appearing at all. It was as good as a play, even that, to my unaccustomed eyes. Then the concert room, the taking our seats, the quiet assurance of protection under which we moved. The room was about half full when we arrived; and to sit still and see the people come in, the faces, the figures, the manners, the dresses, kept me busy, eyes and mind, up to the time of the music beginning.

I had gone in rather a sad mood. I was thus busy in a sort of dreamy, passive way; not unhappy, but exceedingly quiet. I can hardly tell what made me sad. I suppose, some hidden sense of missing harmonies, and some feeling of being alone. Mr. Iredell's care of his wife and his attention to her were most delicate and perfect; enough, I thought, to content any woman. Were they rightly appreciated? Perhaps. Olive received them as she did her fur cloak at his hands; and she certainly appreciated *that*. Manner is different in different people. And *to* different people. Mr. Iredell's care of me was another thing. It was not that he forgot or neglected me; he never did; but his attentions were rendered with a certain grave matter-of-factness. I could not fancy him my brother. I had more of the brotherly feeling about Sandie Birkenstall. I did not wish this changed;

not at all; I like it well and approve it; which did not however hinder its making me feel alone. That is natural, I suppose. Mr. Iredell sat now where I could not see him; Olive was between us; and I was left to my undisturbed musing and observations.

So, as I said, I was a little sad, a little quiet, up to the time when the great musician entered and began to draw his bow over his violin. And with that, the strangest change passed over me. I came as near, I suppose, to the state of a disembodied spirit as one can attain *in* the body. It seemed to me presently as if all earthly bonds that bound me to flesh and time were severed, and I were floating in a region of life and power and liberty. Yet not so but that a certain consciousness of this being an unreal state stole in to enhance the moment's glad flight. The things of the petty present dwindled to their real insignificance; and I revelled in the region of spirits; in love and light and joy, in tenderness and charities; in the greatest Love of all, and in the streams of human sweetness that flow from that. Mr. Iredell had warned us that this concert was to be something special; less popular, and more for the initiated in the science of music; and Olive had shrugged her shoulders, and I had made up my mind to pick up the scattered crumbs of intelligible pleasure that might fall within my reach. How it was with Olive, or with anybody else, now, I neither thought nor cared; for myself the music was working its full spell and I was lost

to all mere externals. I think, I sang with the angels. Perhaps they came down and sang with me. Surely I had heavenly company. That of earth failed wholly from my view.

I knew I must come down from my ecstasy, and I was not dismayed, but content, when the evening was over and we rose to go. I went home content, and slept in the peace of contentness.

> "To-morrow let the sun his beams display,
> Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day!"

And to have lived one such evening, is to have had what one can never lose.

The next morning I found myself in a little doubt what to do about breakfast. I must have breakfast, that was certain. Should I go down and take it alone with Mr. Iredell? Or should I wait till eleven o'clock and keep Olive's chocolate cup company? My stomach, I found, objected to that; so I went down. Found however that Mr. Iredell had already breakfasted and was gone; and I took a leisurely meal by myself, studying the pretty details of the old room and the pictures on the walls; and wondering at myself, seated there in state all alone, attentively waited upon and served, and having nothing to do with my breakfast but to eat it. I mused, while I drank my tea. This is not my line of life, and I am afraid of getting spoiled. I rather wish I was back in Chesterfield again.

I was called to Olive at eleven. She enquired about my breakfast, and I told her.

"You were pleased with the music last night," said she carelessly.

"Very much! Were not you?"

"I was rather tired. I don't fancy violins so much."

"Violins! But *this* violin?"

"Yes, it's very fine, no doubt; but I like the voice better. I would rather hear Lucetti."

"Who is Lucetti?"

"To ask that! But you have come from the mountains. Doesn't the world look curious to you after living with the crows so long?"

"Quite curious. But who *is* Lucetti?"

"Madame Lucetti. She is the great singer of the present moment; that is, of the present winter; the prima donna of the Italian opera."

"Does she give concerts too?" I asked innocently.

Olive hesitated, and then said, "No."

"O, then you have not heard her."

Olive paused again, longer this time, and looking up at me from her cup of chocolate, said,

"I have heard her."

"Where?"

"In 'La Sonnambula'—and 'Il Flauto magico.'"

"In the opera?" said I, not believing my ears. "You do not mean in the opera?"

Olive nodded. "Why not? I mean in the opera."

"O Olive, Olive, Olive!—" I cried, and could not say a word more. I was fairly gasping.

"Why not?" repeated Olive coolly and eyeing me.

"You know Mr. Iredell would not like it."

"How do *you* know that?"

"I know. And you know."

"It does not signify," said Olive. "People must go according to their different convictions. Mine are not the same as Mr. Iredell's. It does not follow that they are not as likely to be right."

"But, Olive!" and I stopped.—"Does he know it?"

"What?—that my convictions are not the same as his, on some points? Probably. He must be convinced of that by this time, I should think. That is no harm. Life would be stupid if everybody thought alike."

"No, no, Olive; I mean, does your husband know that you have been to the opera?"

"How you roll out those words—'my husband'—with solemn emphasis!" said she laughing slightly. "They are very tremendous words to your inexperience, are they not?"

"Olive, don't laugh."

"Why not?"

"It is not a laughing matter."

"That is how you look at it. It is a laughing matter to me to see your face when you say those words,—'your husband.' When you have one of those articles for yourself, it will seem less terribly significant."

"You do not answer me," I observed.

"I do not know why I should."

"Then I am very glad I came from Chesterfield. Olive,—dear Olive, you must not do this."

"Do what?" said she, eyeing me.

"You must not try to do things unknown to Mr. Iredell. You must not, sister! Nothing but trouble will come of it."

Olive eyed me in a curious way. If I had not had a good conscience, I should not have liked it.

"You think I should tell him everything I do, like a good little child? My dear, the relations between us are not of that sort. We do not live in the old times of social bondage; marriage leaves both husband and wife free now-a-days, within certain limits, to do their pleasure."

"Not to each other's displeasure?"

Olive shrugged her shoulders. "That is as it may be. I cannot be bound by Mr. Iredell's conscience. In my judgment there is not the slightest harm in going to the opera."

"Against Mr. Iredell's wish?"

"I have not asked him!"

"But you know it, without asking."

"I cannot help that."

"Olive, do not displease him!" I said very earnestly.

"What do you suppose he would do?" she asked, with a curious half smile and that regarding look again.

"I suppose he would be greatly grieved."

"Pooh!—nonsense! About such a trifle."

"He would not think it a trifle. And you do not. And if you love him, Olive, you will not try the question. No more will you, if you love your own happiness."

"That will do," said she coldly. "We will say no more about it, if you please. You *can* say no more; and I have no wish to discuss the subject further."

We talked of other things accordingly, but I was extremely disturbed. I do not believe that game succeeds with most men; and that it would not succeed with Mr. Iredell I was very sure.

We were scarcely seated at luncheon to-day, when Miss Forella came in. She came in as one familiar there; greeted me very coolly, but the master of the house with more observance. Olive, I thought, was hardly glad to see her.

"So you took all your household to that stupid concert last night," she began, addressing Mr. Iredell. "Wasn't it awfully heavy?"

"You found it so?" said he calmly.

"I thought it was dull," said Olive.

"Dull! If anything is dull, it is a violin, pure and simple, without anything to help it.—Look at Miss Burgoyne's eyes!" she burst out laughing. "It is good to see somebody from the country once in a while, who shews us how we *ought* to be affected; we, blasé and spoiled city people. I saw you last night," she went on, nodding at me. "It was a treat to look at you. I was quite near you all, though you didn't know it."

"You enjoyed the music?" asked Mr. Iredell, looking at me now.

"Enjoyed it!" cried Ernestine. "You don't know what you lost by sitting off at one side as you did Enjoy? Why, she was like an enchanted princess; and she entered fairyland by the gates of her ears just as soon as ever the music began to play. Then sometimes the tears rolled down her face—"

"O no!" said I. "Impossible."

"—And sometimes her lips broke into the most seraphic smile,—at least Mr. Francis said it was seraphic; I have no acquaintance among seraphs myself. What does a seraphic smile mean, Mr. Iredell? It is stupid to use words and not know what they mean."

I thought he was not very willing to answer her, but she pressed her question and would be answered. He said gravely then, that seraphs were a high order of angelic creatures, supposed to be full of love and loving devotion.

"I wonder if that fits?" said Ernestine, looking over at me audaciously. "Well, I know that musty old music raised no seraphic feelings in me; so if I smiled, I am afraid it was of quite another kind. I would rather hear Lucetti any day, at her worst, than Ole Bull at his best; wouldn't you?" she said turning the question to Olive. Olive said yes, though I knew she was vexed to have to say it.

"Lucetti's high notes are so delicious, aren't they? and isn't her shake inimitable?"

Olive agreed.

"And she has such sweet little ways, don't you think so? simple and innocent, like a child. They say, that is put on. I do not believe it could be put on. What do you say?"

"Natural, I should think," said Olive. "Ernestine, have another chop, won't you?"

But Ernestine could carry on two things at once, and the chop never stayed her tongue.

"I think Lucetti is just lovely!" she said, accepting jelly. "I am crazy about her. Mr. Iredell, have you seen her?"

"No."

"Aren't you going?"

"Where does she sing?"

"It's 'La Sonnambula' to-night; 'Lucia di Lammermoor' to-morrow night. I haven't heard her in Lucia; I am dying to see her in that. They say it is one of her best parts."

"Is it the seeing, or the hearing, that gives you so much pleasure?" he asked with a half smile.

"O one can do both at once, you know. I am not seraphic; I cannot live upon pure sound, like some people. Mr. Iredell, why do we like to hear music, anyhow? It don't mean anything."

"If you think so, I do not see how it should give *you* any pleasure."

"Why, does it mean anything to you?"

"Yes."

"What?"

Mr. Iredell laughed.

"Something seraphic, I suppose. Well, I am not

an angel yet. I don't understand it. I suppose we shall all be angels by and by,—shall we not?"

"Why do you think so?"

"Why we always tell children when their brothers and sisters die, that they are angels in heaven. Ain't it true?"

"We have no authority on the subject but the Bible; and that says nothing of the kind."

"Don't it? Why do we say so, then?"

"You must answer for yourself," said Mr. Iredell. "I never do say so."

"But what *are* they then? what becomes of them?"

"Of whom?"

"People that go out of this world."

"That depends on what they chose to be when they were in this world."

"And not angels?"

"No."

"What then?"

"Ernestine, what nonsense!" Olive broke in. "How can Mr. Iredell know?"

"He thinks he knows," said the girl.

"After that," said Mr. Iredell, laughing and rising from the table, "I may be excused from any more catechism." And he left us.

Ernestine's tone changed and she turned to my sister. "Will you go to-morrow night with me, to Lucetti?"

Olive shook her head.

"Do! Why not?"

"I cannot go to-morrow."

"Will Mr. Iredell make a fuss?"

"I do not think he will make a fuss," said Olive stiffly; "but I shall not go out in the evening again this week."

"That's too bad! And they say she's so lovely in Lucia. Never mind; I will go, and I will tell you about it."

And recollecting some business that required her presence, she was off; having, I judged, spoiled Olive's luncheon. I am sure she spoiled mine.

"I do not know, sometimes, whether that girl is mischievous or innocent," was Olive's remark as the street door was heard to close.

"She is not innocent," I replied. "Do not trust her."

"She is a fool!" said Olive. That was all she said. I wondered whether Mr. Iredell's meal had been spoiled too? There was no means of judging. Nothing in his face or manner betrayed that he had drawn any inferences from Ernestine's words; but for my part I did not think that proved anything. Nor did Olive, I could see by her manner.

Dec. 20.

WE have gone to no more concerts, nor anywhere else in the evening, since I wrote last. The life we are leading is exceedingly quiet; but to me lovely and sweet beyond anything I ever

knew. I delight, in the first place, in the old house and its furniture. Every nook and corner of it is pleasant to my eyes, from the wide hall and the easy, gentle staircase, to the drawing room with its dark old spindle-legged and inlaid tables and soft, thick Persian carpet. There are pictures, old china, antique bronzes, quaint old-fashioned lamps, wide fireplaces and blazing wood fires. Nothing is brilliant or showy or in the fashion of to-day; everything comfortable, quiet to the eye, easy to the hand and foot. A perpetual pleasure to me; but Olive does not see it with the same eyes. The discovery of this greatly astonished me.

We were sitting together in the drawing room one evening; Mr. Iredell being out. When he is at home, which is generally the case in the evenings, we gather in the library. To-night visiters had summoned us to the drawing room, but they were gone, and Olive and I were alone. Nothing could be cheerier, I thought, than the glow of the fire cast upon the dark, warm tints prevailing in the apartment; I was enjoying it, when Olive spoke.

"What a musty old place this house is!"

"Musty!" I repeated, hardly believing my ears.

"Yes. O the air is good enough, and the curtains are not moth-eaten. But there is the ghostly presence of the whole house of Iredell lingering in it."

"I like that," said I.

"Naturally, I prefer my own taste to theirs," said

Olive a little scornfully. "Everything here is perfectly and utterly antiquated, out of date; out of fashion."

"That is one thing that makes it so pleasant," I returned. "It is not new."

"New!" said Olive,—"it was new sixty or seventy years ago; more, for ought I know. This carpet has been down forty years."

"It does not shew that."

"And the furniture is older; fifty years old, and sixty, and a hundred, and I dare say more."

"And you do not like it?"

"No, of course I do not. There is only one room in the house I like; and that is my own."

It was the only one in the house which jarred upon my sense of beauty and harmony; but I did not say so.

"And I am going to change it," Olive went on.

"O Olive!—Will Mr. Iredell like that?"

"He does not care," said she. "He would not change anything till it was dropping to pieces with old age; but I mean to do it. Fifty years is enough for one set of furniture to last."

"Will he like to have it changed?" I asked again.

"It is *my* affair," said Olive. "I shall not ask him. Even in an Indian wigwam, the squaw says how things shall be inside the house."

"But this is not an Indian wigwam."

"I will begin with the carpet," said Olive surveying the rich old Persian web. "I don't believe

Mr. Iredell would find out the change in half a year. Then by degrees other things. I saw a lovely cabinet of satin wood and ebony the other day, that I should like."

"You do not mean, Olive, that you will do anything without asking Mr. Iredell?"

"Are you afraid of him?" said she curling her lips.

"I should be very much afraid of displeasing him."

"Every woman in the land chooses her own carpets."

"But no man in the land, or in any land, likes to be cheated."

"Cheated!" cried Olive.

"Well, deceived, then."

"Deceived! I am not deceiving him."

"I do not know what you call it. If you do things secretly that he would not like, that is not treating him with confidence."

"People ought to be independent, if they *are* married."

"But also people have a right to be consulted in the spending of their money; and in other things, where their interests are concerned."

"Mr. Iredell has the most absurd notions in the matter of spending money; it is really no use to consult with him."

"Different from yours?"

"I should think so!" said Olive impatiently, picking up a brand with the tongs and throwing

it on the fire. "And it is not as if he had not money enough, Desire; he has money enough. He needn't be so stingy with it."

"Stingy? O Olive, Olive!" said I. "Look at these wood fires. He might put a furnace in the house, and save ever so much money so."

"He says that is health," Olive returned. "And a furnace would be a change; and he won't change. I wish he would put in a furnace; it is a great deal less trouble. *That* I cannot do; but I can take up this old carpet, and I will."

"You will spoil the room. And Olive, you will damage your own happiness. Don't do anything without asking Mr. Iredell."

"It is no use to ask him. If I do it, I must do it another way. He will not mind it when it is done."

This conversation filled me full of trouble. I could not prevail with my sister; I never had much influence with her, and of course less than ever now. I felt sure she would not be happy in her married life on such a plan as she was proposing; and down, below this feeling, hardly owned by my thoughts, was another consciousness; that she was not happy in it now. Not happy! and when she had everything in the world that she had desired to have; all her own way. And I,—whose wishes had been thwarted and checked,—I was the happiest of the two. I marvelled, sorrowfully, recognizing this. But what was the matter with Olive? I was afraid to answer this question. I would not answer it.

As I said, the life we are living is pleasant exceedingly. My breakfast is commonly taken alone, as on that first morning. Following that, I have some hours for reading. My room is, to my taste, charming; low-ceiled, warm, quaint, quiet. There, in the easiest of easy chairs, I read and read; a table beside me loaded with books, writing things, and maps. When Olive takes her breakfast I go to her and keep her company; and generally we work and talk till half past one. Luncheon is then a pleasant gathering time; we rarely have company; and Mr. Iredell talks. Talks somewhat as he used to do in those days when I first knew him; telling all sorts of things interesting to hear, either out of his experience or from his store of information, which is very large. To say that these talks are just like those would not be true; nothing ever, to me, will be just like them again. His eyes now are generally directed to his wife, and the smile and the look of intelligence or sympathy are exchanged, or at least sought, with her. Once in a while they come to me and give me a start; I am glad they do not come often. Indeed Mr. Iredell's whole manner to me is not what it was then. It is always thoughtful and kind, but it is grave and quiet and a little abstracted. I do not think about it, but I know the difference. For all that, the talks are out of the same store and from the same voice; and they make the lunch time often better than a play to me. How different the social atmosphere here and in my other sister's

house! There is intelligence enough in Mr. Birkenstall, and information too; yet far less culture, less knowledge of the world at large, less grace of manner, less forgetfulness of self, less care for others. Far narrower intellectual tastes, also; in Mr. Iredell they are very wide; and that is one thing I enjoy in his company, the feeling that my own nature is enlarging and enriching and ennobling under the influence of his. Sometimes I am almost afraid I enjoy it too much, and I think of going back to Chesterfield. However, just for the present, I cannot do that.

After luncheon Olive and I go out. To walk, sometimes; oftener in the carriage. She goes shopping, visiting, looking at pretty things of various sorts; and as I like to look at pretty things, the time is passed pleasantly. We bring up at Caroline's not seldom, and chat with her for a while; but my sisters and I do not think alike; and the conversation is a terrible contrast to what we had at lunch time. Still, it is pleasant to be together; and that rare gratification I enjoy all I can. After we come home, Olive generally dresses; and I have again a long, quiet time to myself, in which I can do what I like. I light my gas, and read, or write, or think; and enjoy the hour greatly.

Then comes dinner; and dinner is not the same thing two days running. What is on the table does not so change; but what is around it. The covers are always laid for more than three; and we sit down more than three to dinner. But Olive

never knows who is coming; and the strangers are generally somebody with whom Mr. Iredell has business to talk about, or somebody who is in want of social or material comfort. I can see that, in variety, from evening to evening; and I can see too how the comfort walks into them. People who are lonely; people who are in trouble; people who are poor; or people who are in feeble health and needing good food. They all get that, for the dinners are excellent; and they get it along with so much true hospitality, such genial kindness, such lively, happy, good talk, that they all get comforted up. It is strange, pitiful and glad at once, to see the lines of a weary face change after the first spoonful of soup. It is lovely to see how the sad consciousness of a threadbare coat and generally shabby exterior is gradually charmed out of a man's mind by kindness and the mental and spiritual play of the conversation; charmed away, so that the brow is lifted up, and the eyes look straight out, and timidity and hesitancy vanish and give place to a free manner. The people are made to forget themselves. It is a study to me, night after night. Night after night I see Mr. Iredell have a new variety of character to deal with, or a new phasis of human downheartedness to lift up; and I see him do it; and I wonder and admire, sometimes till the tears come into my eyes, at the grace and skill and versatility of resources with which he does it. I help all I can, of course; and enjoy the whole thing mightily. Olive does her part as the lady of

the house; no more. The arrangement is not to her taste.

"Such a fancy!" she broke out one evening, when she and I had withdrawn to the library. "No other woman in town, I am sure, has such dinner guests."

"I do not believe there is one," I assented.

"Such a crazy hobby!" she went on.

"Do you think so?"

"Mr. Iredell does not seem to care whom he brings home with him."

"Only, it is sure to be somebody who is in need of it."

"Need!" said Olive. "Don't you think he might consider *my* need a little? This worn-out old missionary now, this evening! My dear, his coat was buttoned up close because he had not a shirt fit to shew under it."

"But how delicious his telling of shooting grouse at the West!"

"I wonder why he did not stay there!"

"But, Olive, did you see how good the grouse was to him in another capacity to-day? not to shoot, but to eat?"

"They all want to eat," said Olive. "*I* would have a different sort of dinner for them; and I would give it to them in a restaurant."

"It would not do them the good, Olive," said I. And I thought of the, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these—"

"So unreasonable?" said Olive, not minding me.

"But do you recollect, the Bible says, 'if thou bring the poor that are cast out to thine house'; it does not say, to a restaurant."

"I suppose there were no restaurants in those days."

Presently Mr. Iredell came in. He brought no strangers to the library. By eight o'clock, or half past eight at latest, they are gone, and he comes to us there. And then, for the remainder of the evening, he reads aloud to us. Reads and talks; for reading leads to talking inevitably; and our entertainment is of the richest description. Sometimes it is a new book, sometimes an old one. Sometimes it is science, sometimes art, sometimes fiction; in fact it is of all possible sorts, and the talk takes all possible lines, conforming or diverging. The pleasure of these evenings, I am afraid, is too much. I am in danger of getting too fond of them; for these are not a part of my life; only a casualty. I cannot help it; I must enjoy while I have them. The very room in which we sit heightens the effect. Like all the rest of the house, it is dark and quaint; it is large, holds a great many books, and is built round an angle of the central hall, in a very odd way, forming an L. It has a dark waxed floor, with rugs and mats and carpets laid down here and there; and of course an open fireplace, in front of which we gather. At half past ten, or eleven, Olive and I take our departure.

Dec. 22.

I HAD last evening what I did not want; the hearing, namely, of a talk that I was not meant to hear. It was afternoon, rather, not just evening. Mr. Iredell was going out to dinner, as I understood, and I made sure the library was empty; so I took the opportunity to go there and study at my leisure Doré's illustrations of the Bible. I was in the easiest of easy chairs, with the great book on a stand before me; and as long as light served I looked and studied to my heart's content. Light failed at last, and I meant to light the gas and go on; but I was in no hurry. I was very comfortably placed; I was willing to rest my eyes and head for a little, during the "blind man's holiday"; and I fell into a long muse, in which light and dark were so blended that I no longer knew which was which. As the daylight waned, by and by a ray of moonlight faintly stole in at the window. I do not know why, but as straight and as cold as itself it carried my thoughts home. That same moon was shining on Chesterfield valley: there was my place; what did I here in Philadelphia, in Mr. Iredell's library, luxuriating in Doré and an easy chair? Would this sort of thing fit me for my own proper sphere and life-work, to which I must give myself? In Chesterfield valley art was not known; luxury not regarded; the hard business of every-day concerns filled all hands. Not all *heads* so exclusively but that Farmer Binna-

cle could philosophize and Deacon Parsons speculate; and they and others read the debates in Congress, and held in sober and sharp review the doings and the characters of public men. There was interest in more liberal knowledge too; and some of the women of Chesterfield were great readers. But of that delicate world of art, where Doré paints and Ole Bull plays the violin, they know nothing. The first glimpse into it has not been granted them; for them it is an unknown world, as much as ever America was before Columbus, and much more. My life lies there, among those people; what is Doré to me? And then I said to myself that Doré and Ole Bull were inexpressibly much to me; a help and not a hindrance; an enlargement and enriching of my whole nature, which must make me fitter for work and enable me to do it better, provided they did not spoil me. Was I getting a little spoiled?

I was considering this question, trying to be impartial and yet to give a negative answer, when I was violently startled by some words spoken quite near to me. I saw nobody, for I was sitting just beyond the angle of the library, and besides, with my back turned towards the other and longer arm of the L, where the fireplace was. I had placed myself so to let the light from a window come in at my left hand, where now the moonbeams came brightly in; but they did not illumine me, and the rest of the room was in shadow, relieved, I suppose, on the other side of the angle by the fire I could not

see. The voice was Mr. Iredell's. I had heard no step; however, on the soft rugs a step could fall and not be heard; and it was clear that two people were in the room. The words I heard were these.

"Where did you hear Madame Lucetti, Olive?"

I was so startled, not only at the voice but at the words, that I did not know what to do. I ought not to be where I was; and yet at the instant I was so much afraid of interrupting Olive's answer that I did not move. I desired above all things that she should answer, for the subject troubled me; and I knew, if I stirred, Olive would get rid of the necessity of speaking, for that time at least. I held my breath, not to listen, but that she might speak. She was not at all ready to speak, I perceived, for the answer lingered. The question had been put in the calmest, most matter-of-fact tone possible. When the answer came, it was an evasion.

"You know, you and I do not think alike about public singers and public singing, Mr. Iredell."

"Do we not?" said he in the same clear tone. "What do you take to be my judgment of public singing?"

"Well, not public singing merely, but public acting."

"Whatever my judgment of such matters may be, and right or wrong, don't you think, my dear Olive, it is best that you should respect it?"

The words were very gently spoken. Olive's reply was excited.

"I think marriage does not take away one's independence of thought."

"I hope not! But does it not in a slight degree interfere with absolute independence of action? 'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?'"

"I do not ask you to go with me, Mr. Iredell. That would be unreasonable."

"And is it unreasonable, if I ask you not to go without me?"

"I think so," said Olive. "You would not go, would you?"

"No," said he gravely.

"These people are getting their living in an honest way."

"Grant that; it is a way that we cannot encourage without cruel selfishness. No woman ought to be condemned to it."

"But it does not, or it *need* not, do herself or others any harm."

"You are begging the question. If you take the testimony of those who know and are best capable of judging, it does great harm to a woman. And if you take the statistics of the matter, the stage is the ruin of multitudes of those who only look on."

"The stage ought to be elevated in tone and made unexceptionable."

"That has been tried, Olive, and found impracticable. It has been tried. But apart from all that, it is not an amusement for a Christian."

"Why not?"

"It exercises too much fascination. It lays claim

to too much time and thought and feeling, and diverts them from their proper channel."

"Why is not the same true of every amusement? galleries of pictures, for instance, and Ole Bull's concerts?"

"The simple answer is, that as a matter of fact it is *not* true; and the 'why' lies in the nature of things. Galleries of pictures and Ole Bull's concerts have none of those evil effects I was speaking of, but the contrary."

"You read Shakspeare," said Olive.

"I will read it to you as often as you like, if you will promise me to go no more to any theatrical or operatic performances."

There was a pause.

"Promise me, Olive!" And I heard the light sound of a kiss, with which the demand was emphasized and sweetened at once. But the promise I did not hear.

"It is not for my honour," he said then more gravely, "that my wife should seem to countenance what I am known to disapprove. And Olive, it is not for yours."

"Everybody knows you are not responsible."

"I cannot take that view of it. My sense of responsibility obliges me to do what I am very sorry to do—interfere with your pleasure."

"What I do does not compromise you."

"It must not, Olive. May I trust that in future you will deny yourself this pleasure, for my sake?"

"What would you do, if I were perverse enough

to refuse?" said she, with an accent I could not interpret.

"It is not my way to threaten."

"You would hinder me?"

"I *am* hindering you," said he good-humouredly. "Give me your promise, Olive, and let me go. It is time."

"I don't think it is reasonable," said Olive; "but I suppose you must have your own way. I promise. What would you do, if *I* insisted on some change in *your* ways?"

"Consider the matter—" said he laughingly; and left the room. Olive left it immediately after. I had been afraid to stir. The first minute, when I could have made my presence known, having been lost through want of presence of mind, there was no other minute in which it had been possible.

I sat still in the moonlight which began to edge up to me now, but the whole course of my meditations was changed. I was thinking no longer of Art and Doré. No, nor of my sister, though she gave me matter enough. I was thinking of myself, somewhat awe-struck. For the start my heart had given when I suddenly heard Mr. Iredell's voice so near me, had revealed to me something, which until that moment I had not so certainly known. I had fondly supposed all that chapter of my life closed, all that half of my heart dead and withered; but here it was alive; in full, quick, sentient existence. So much my stay in this pleasant house had done for me; it had unearthed the creature which had

retreated to the depths of its cover and was supposed to be winter-killed. No, Desire; your battle is not so soon fought and won; life is not yet for you an even prairie ground; with no rocks and precipices, if also with no hills and fair outlooks. There is rough walking for you yet, and it would be roughest of all in this house. It will not do; I must go back to Chesterfield. I sat looking at this necessity; at the same time recognizing also the fact that I could not without great violence break away at once; Olive expects me to stay with her until spring, and I have allowed her to expect it. I have no excuse for making the change and going now. I came to that conclusion, slowly gathered myself up and shut the volume which lay open before me in the moonlight, and somewhat miserably made my way up stairs. Well, doth not the Lord know? And life is,—to do his will. I am content, I am content.

Dec. 27.

CHRISTMAS EVE came in a storm of snow and wind. We were to have gone out, to spend the evening with Caroline; but the weather was too bad. We sat instead in the library as usual, and read and talked; and at intervals paused to listen to the wind. It rushed round the house, whistled in the chimney, roared in great blasts along the street; then lulled for a moment, and

began a low, soft singing up somewhere in the region of the roof, or the upper air.

"That's a Christmas wind," said Mr. Iredell.

"Why? because it blows at Christmas?" Olive asked.

"Yes. It often blows so at Christmas. It always sounds Christmas-like to me. I believe it seems to waken the chimes of joy which always rang in my childhood's ears at this time; the vibrations linger yet."

"Was Christmas such a pleasant time to you?" Olive said carelessly.

"Very pleasant? My mother always made it so. It was always a time brim-full of enjoyment for me —and my sister."

I knew, for Olive had told me, that Mr. Iredell had been passionately fond of this sister, and that the loss of her had shadowed his early life. She was mentioned now with a softened and lowered voice, as one held in a very tender memory.

"Christmas was never anything to me," Olive presently went on. "We roasted a turkey at New Year's and made mince pies; and usually gathered a party together to eat them; but there was no particular romance about that; and if the wind sighed, nobody minded."

"How was it with you, Desire!"

"Me?" said I starting. "O it was with me as with Olive. Nobody made anything special of Christmas. I feel as if in many things I have only lately begun to live and see what they are."

"Christmas too?" said Olive laughing. "Will you hang up your stocking, and expect Santa Claus will be more good to you than he used to be in the old times? If I got an apple and a pair of scissors and a fancy gingercake, I thought myself well off."

"Hang up your stocking, by all means, Desire," said Mr. Iredell. "That wind is not whistling for nothing. Santa Claus is certainly about in this weather. I wish I knew he would not pass over just those houses where he is most wanted!"

"*They* won't miss him," said Olive. "What people don't know, they don't want."

"True, only within limits," returned Mr. Iredell. "Comfort is wanted, by many a one who never knew it. Fire, and food, and shelter—I wish I could give them to all who need them in Philadelphia to-night?"

"I have no doubt you have done your share," remarked Olive.

"What is anybody's 'share,' in that work?"

"O, I don't know," she answered. "His fair proportion, I suppose, of the relief to be given; according to his circumstances."

"How shall one know what is his 'proportion,' in that view of his responsibilities?"

"He knows what he can afford."

"But that has nothing to do with what other people afford."

"It ought."

"Why?"

"No one ought to be burdened disproportionately."

"Burdened! There is your mistake. If you take it as a burden, you cannot do it. Desire, you remember how, when the Lord was on earth, he helped and relieved all who applied to him?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Does he care for those suffering classes less now?"

"No—of course he cannot care less. He does not change."

"'The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Then why does he not still relieve the sufferers?"

"I don't know," said I; "I thought—"

"He gave it in charge to his people to do; to us. We are his ministers and messengers, to carry on the work which he began, and for which he left us the means and the material. And he says, Olive, that he will reckon it as done to himself. Shall I try how *little* I can do for my Master? shall I count services rendered, lest there be too many?"

"At that rate," said Olive, "where will you stop?"

"When I have done all I can."

"But *all you can* may mean a great deal."

"I would be thankful."

"Mr. Iredell, I do think you carry things too far. A man has to attend to his family."

"Are you neglected?" said he smiling."

"No—" said Olive; but if I were to propose to you to get a new carpet for the drawing room

I suppose you would tell me you could not afford it."

Mr. Iredell paused, and an expression of some surprise passed over his features; his answer however was in a calm business tone.

"Is the carpet not respectable?"

"Respectable!—but it is very old, Mr. Iredell; it has been down a long while; its freshness is off, and it is old-fashioned. I don't like it, either; it is too dark."

"But it is respectable?"

"Of course, it is respectable."

"Suppose I shew you, that the price of a new carpet would keep a hundred children out of the streets this winter?"

"Keep them where?"

"Where they would be fed and sheltered and taught and taken care of."

Olive was silent.

"Which is best?"

Olive hesitated again, and then said that at that rate she did not see how anybody was to have anything.

"Except the poor children?—" said Mr. Iredell. "Well, Olive, I would rather they had it than I. It is my Master, you know."

Olive let the matter drop, and so did he. A little later, she and I were sitting over the fire in her dressing room, whither she had drawn me.

"You see," she said, "what Mr. Iredell thinks about the carpet."

"But Olive, Olive!" I cried; "would you not rather do the Lord's work than have a new carpet?"

"He does enough of that work besides. He is always doing it. See these old fogies, or young ones, that he brings home to dinner every day. He could do all that, and let me have my carpet too."

"Yet the carpet would do so much more; you cannot help that."

"Where is one to stop, then?"

"O where Mr. Iredell said; when you have done *all you can.* Olive, you are throwing happiness away; you are throwing happiness away!—Why do you?"

Olive did not answer, and I thought was not pleased. Nor was I. We sat still listening to the Christmas wind, which was charged now with all sorts of associations for me. Was this, I wondered, a happy Christmas to Mr. Iredell? Rembering those at his old home and with his mother and sister, did his wife make up to him for what he used to have and had no longer? And Olive—how Olive was missing her chance, her rich chance of a noble and happy life. I sat still a while, and then I rose up and kissed her and went to my own room.

And sadness overcame me there; and I did what I rarely do; gave way to tears. They were heavy and unrefreshing tears; and I went to sleep with them hardly dry.

But the morning, Christmas morning, broke bright and sparkling upon me. The storm was

past. There was a white glory upon the world, and a crystal glitter upon every snow surface, brilliant and laughing in light. I remembered that it was Christmas Day, and that Christmas meant "peace on earth"; and that the King of peace, whose own the day is, would surely not disown his name to any who trust in him. Therefore not to me. There came therewith a sort of peace into my heart, which was not without some brightness of its own, if the sparkle was wanting. What a sparkle the outward world was in! Snow lying, and snow flying in the wind, the floating separate crystals catching the sun rays and giving them back, so that at times the air seemed full of diamond dust. Well,—life was not like *that* to me any longer. No, but its brightness was from the sun direct, beholden to no reflections, sweet and golden. I watched at the window, fascinated with the beauty outside. The wind brought flurries of the light, dry snow, and all the air would be full of that diamond sparkle; then it would clear away, and the intense blue overhead shew itself without any sort of a veil. There were no snow fields beneath, and no hills, with their wooded sides shaking off showers of snow at every such sweep of the wind over them. That would be fairer yet to look upon; yet as I thought of it, Chesterfield seemed to me to be a cold place, and I felt as if I were here in the very region of summer.

I was half dressed, looking and thinking, when a knock came at my door. It was my sister's

woman, for Olive has a maid now, bringing me a basket; with her mistress's love. I took in the basket, which had an odd way of being at once light and heavy; and lifted up some silk paper which covered it; warned already by a peculiar odour what I was going to see. Yes, I knew it,—fur! I lifted it up, as I could, for fold after fold fell away from my fingers, till I saw what I held; a great fur cape with long ends, big enough to cover me all up. Certainly I should never be cold again out of doors, whatever happened to me anywhere else. It was beautiful fur; I could see that, without being a connoisseur; excellence in many things commends itself to the perception even of the uninitiated. Soft and lovely; I have all a woman's liking for pretty things, I believe; and I held the thing in my hands, with incredulous pleasure. Then there came another knock at the door. I opened. Martha again, with another object in her grasp, and "Mr. Iredell's Christmas good wishes." I took this also from her and came in to look at it. A picture, a beautiful photograph, in the neatest of delicate frames. This picture was quite large. I set it down in a good light, and sat down myself before it to study it; but I found I needed help. It was beautiful, and delighted me, but I could not read the story of it. So it occurred to me at last that I had better finish dressing and be ready to receive explanations. Mr. Iredell remembered then that I loved pictures. That was kind of him.

When I was ready I went to Olive's room; who

this time was up and dressing, intending to honour Christmas morning by taking breakfast with us. I thanked her warmly for her gift.

"Does it please you?" said she. Mr. Iredell would have it furs and nothing else."

"But it is from you?" said I.

"O yes; he said you would like it better so. But you know, making people warm is one of his hobbies. Did he give you anything?"

I nodded. "A picture."

"A picture!" cried Olive. "He gave me a picture. There it is."

"O that is another," I said. "Mine is just the same size, and framed so, but different. How beautiful! I know what this is. I have seen it before." I got down on the floor to examine it.

"What is it?" said Olive coldly. I do not know what it means."

"Don't you? It is by Millais. It is the Eve of St. Bartholomew. This man is a Huguenot, and the lady is a Catholic, and she knows that the Catholics have agreed to recognize each other in the confusion that night by a white favour worn somehow; so she is trying to tie her handkerchief upon his arm."

"To save his life—" said Olive.

"And he will not let her."

"He does not know what it means?"

"O yes, he knows, but he will not buy his life at the expense of his truth. He will not disown his religion."

"He might consider *her*," remarked Olive.

"And be false?" said I looking up.

"A white handkerchief is not a falsehood. He don't put it on; he need not take it off. It would keep some one from committing murder. I think you and Mr. Iredell have very strained notions of right and wrong."

"Would you like Mr. Iredell to be false to his principles, to be untrue to his religion, for the sake of doing you a pleasure?"

"Are you thinking of the drawing-room carpet? I wonder if *he* was thinking of it, and meant to give me a lesson this way! What is your picture about?"

"It is another parting," said I, "but I do not understand it. I am going to ask Mr. Iredell to explain."

"Go and fetch it, and let us see them together."

I obeyed, but just then we were called to breakfast.

I do not think Olive's mood was genial; nevertheless, that was a bright, sweet, merry breakfast. Mr. Iredell made it so; nothing could resist the power of his brightness and sweetness. The talk was delightful. It was only near the end of the meal that Olive brought up the subject of the pictures and asked him to explain mine.

"It is another couple bidding each other good bye," he answered; "you can see that at a glance; but the bitter drop in the cup is different. Did

you notice the picture on the wall of the room where they are?"

"No."

"It is Napoleon crossing the Alps. The house where that picture hangs must be French, or intensely French in its sympathies. The time is the time when Napoleon had Germany under his heel. Now the Black Brunswicker is going to the war to free his country, and the skull and cross bones on his cap shew that the regiment to which he belongs will give no quarter."

"And she is trying to keep him from going?" I said.

"And honour, and patriotism, forbid him to yield to her."

"As truth and religion forbid the Huguenot. Yes; now I want to compare them."

"What made you give that to Desire?" said Olive.

"I knew she likes such things; and she could appreciate the struggle of passion with duty."

"And you thought I could appreciate the other struggle, of interest with religion?"

"I hoped you could appreciate the victory. There is no struggle in the Huguenot's mind."

"Do *you* never have struggles?" said Olive suddenly. But Mr. Iredell answered with impenetrable calmness,

"I have had them."

"Which sort?"

He smiled at her in a little wonder. "I have

never had an Eve of St. Bartholomew to try me," he said.

"I know!" said Olive. "You would do exactly like that man, and refuse life for a punctilio." But there was a little red spot on each of her cheeks, which I wondered much to see there. Mr. Iredell made no answer, and as we rose to go up stairs, he went to the library. In Olive's room I threw myself down before the pictures, to study and compare. Olive took no part. I had a feeling that she was looking at me.

"Well," said she at last; "what do you see there?"

"All Mr. Iredell said. They are beautiful in their different ways of telling the story. There is no struggle in the Huguenot's face; it is sad, but it is lofty and sweet; there is almost a smile. And the Black Brunswicker's brow is all knotted with pain."

"He is going, though," said Olive. "There is no more struggle in this than in the other one."

"The victory is less complete, then. His will triumphs; but I am afraid feeling makes a terrible rebellion."

"And in the Huguenot it does not?"

"Certainly it does not. He is quiet and calm; quite ready to meet whatever comes." And as I spoke, the lesson contained in my own words went through and through my own heart; at the same time a secret question, what had moved Mr. Iredell to assign *that* picture to Olive, *this* to me. He

wanted her to learn that lesson, perhaps, and gave this to me just because it was the companion picture. But while I was delighted, Olive for some reason or other was out of humour."

"Which do you like best?" said she.

"I like the man best in yours."

"I will change with you."

"O no," said I. "That would not do, since Mr. Iredell has given them. Besides, I like the woman best in mine."

"Do you think she looks like you?"

"Like me! No; I was never so handsome as that."

"You never wore a white satin gown, if that is what you mean," said Olive scornfully; "but you are a great deal better looking than that girl. And she does look a little bit like you."

Olive regarded me, as she said that, with so peculiar an expression that she puzzled me. It was the look of an inquisitor. I sat back on the floor and gazed at her in my turn.

"Are you searching perhaps for some hidden vanity in me?" I asked. "If you are, you should not compare me with that beauty in white."

"You can bear it," said Olive shortly; and she turned away. But when I was going off with my Black Brunswicker, she stopped me.

"Leave it, cannot you? I have not half seen it. I want to compare the two, as you have been doing."

I left the picture of course, a little unwillingly

How easily one falls into a selfish way of looking at things! I remembered now that I should have time enough to enjoy it, and might let Olive have this little bit of pleasure; and I sat down to read my Bible and bring myself into order. For the experiences of the morning had somewhat demoralized me. There was a stir in my heart, which whether it were most pain or pleasure I could not have told; but the stir was greater than I liked. I sat long over my Bible, pondering a word here and a word there; trying to regulate the impatient beats of my pulses by its sweet, steady measure; and at last I arrived at this final conclusion, that Philadelphia is no place for me. I must be where such excitements and demoralization will be far from me. I must go home to Chesterfield, and make some excuse to go at once. If I cannot command my thoughts and feelings, the only next thing is to run away.

I came to this conclusion, shed some tears over it, and went down to lunch. What a thin crust this outer life of society is! and what fires and seethings of hidden elements go on beneath it! So calmly we sat at table, and I as calm as anybody, and talked, and talked,—and all the while the fire burned, and I thought the smoke of the fire would put my eyes out. How good it is we cannot see into each other's hearts.

Jan. 2.

MY resolution was superseded. Mr. Iredell announced, the morning after Christmas day, that he had business in Florida, and was going thither for a few weeks. He said he would take the time while I am here, as being the best time for him to leave Olive; and he would leave us two to carry on all we could of his work while he was gone.

"Desire and me!" Olive repeated. "That is a great compliment to Desire. I should have thought you would leave things to *me*."

"All you can attend to," Mr. Iredell returned smiling; "but you are never visible till lunch time. I charge Desire with attending to all business that comes before that."

"What sort does come?" I asked.

"All sorts."

"You honour me even more than Olive said," I replied. "How can you expect me to fulfil so broad a commission?"

"Or me, either?" added Olive.

"I will give you one easy rule, both of you. It answers a multitude of questions, and applies to the greatest variety of cases. 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, *do ye even so to them*.'"

"You call that an easy rule to follow?" cried Olive.

"I find it so."

"If you were in my place, wouldn't you like to be taken along to Florida?"

"No—" said Mr. Iredell drily.

"And how much money do you expect us to spend upon deserving objects?"

"As much as you find necessary."

"But we might like,—putting ourselves in the place of such objects,—we might like much more than would be necessary?"

"In that case you would cease to be deserving," said Mr. Iredell laughing. "It is supposed that the followers of this rule keep a clear conscience."

So, and it was but two days longer that he waited to make his preparations, Mr. Iredell left us and set out upon his journey. He will be gone several weeks; and when he comes back, or before, if I can, I will take my departure for Chesterfield. I am in one sense relieved; for the life here was getting to be hard for me to bear; on the other hand, the house has lost its light. It is astonishing what a difference it makes everywhere; from my solitary breakfast, which indeed has been often that before, to the evenings, which we now spend in the drawing room instead of the lovely old library. I sit and drink my coffee and eat my roll, sorrowful and thankful at once. For it is not good that anybody with whom I have nothing to do should be so much to me; and it is not wholesome for me to be much in his society; but that very fact makes it hard to do without him. Olive, I think, likes our new dual life sufficiently well.

I cannot get my "Black Brunswicker" out of her room; she has never done with it when I propose to take it away. Perhaps that is as well for me too, to do without it.

Jan. 13.

THIS morning, as I entered the breakfast room, Harry, Mr. Iredell's old major domo, stepped up to me and said there was somebody in the hall wanting to see Mr. Iredell. Harry is a grey-headed coloured man; has always lived in the family, and knows all the ways of its master.

"Didn't you tell the person that Mr. Iredell is away from home?"

Harry shook his head. "It's pecooliar business, Miss Desire; and Mr. Iredell never sends none o' that away."

"What sort of business do you mean?"

"Trouble, ma'am; dat sort."

"What kind of a person is this?"

"Dunno, Miss Desire; 'speck he's a reel 'spectable man, but he's terrible bad off, some way."

I went out into the hall. There rose to meet me the figure of a man, very barely clad, with no overcoat, and a haggard, thin, worn look upon his face which indeed justified Harry's speculations. Otherwise the face was prepossessing, but the grey look of care was all that I could at first see in it.

"Mr. Iredell is not at home," said I. "Can I do anything for you, sir?"

"Could I see Mrs. Iredell?" he said doubtfully, lingeringly. In an instant I knew what to do. It was one of the bitterest days we had had all winter; the cold was intense, pitiless; and I saw a tremble pass over the figure I was looking at.

"I am just going to breakfast," said I. "Sit down, and let me send you a cup of coffee first—the morning is so bitter; and afterwards I will see you again. You can spare the time?"

I went back to the breakfast room, charged Harry what to do, poured out a cup of coffee, had a little table set beside him there in the hall before the fire, and a hot breakfast served upon it. Porridge and rolls, cold beef and sausages, were supplied him in plenty, and he was waited upon, I know, as if he had been a king; for so I told Harry, and Harry was quite ready to do my bidding.

When I went out to the hall again, the gentleman, for I could see he was a gentleman, was sitting quietly looking into the fire; with an expression of grave anxiety indeed upon his face; but without that dreadful, sharp, pinched look which meant starving want. He was a changed being. I sat down on the other side of the fire, and he told me his story. He said he had intended at first simply to ask for work; but my kindness had emboldened him and opened his heart to tell me all. Half an hour later I went up to Olive. She was awake, though in bed still.

"How soon can you get up?" I asked.

"Why? It is bitterly cold, isn't it?"

"Intense."

"Those are days when I like to stay in bed."

"Those are days when there is more than usual to do out of bed."

"Not for me," said Olive lazily, and changing the comfortable position of her head upon her pillows.

"Olive, you are losing your good habits."

"Good for Chesterfield."

"Good for anywhere. Come, I have work for you. I wish you would get right up."

"What sort of work?" said Olive without moving.

"Mr. Iredell's work. Get up, and I will tell you about it."

"Mr. Iredell's work—I don't do, child."

"But I do, while he is away," said I; "as much of it as I can. This time I want your help."

"Money?" said Olive.

"No, not money. I have money."

"You have? Where did you get it?"

"It is Mr. Iredell's money. He put some in my hands the morning he went away, to do his work with."

"Very odd of him! He never put any in *my* hands."

"You just said, you do not do his work. But do get up, Olive! I need your help, and time is precious."

"It is very cold, isn't it?"

"Tremendous. Like some of the days at Chesterfield."

"What help do you want of me? I can talk here."

"I do not want you to talk, not to me. I want you to go out. Come, Olive, get up, and I will tell you about it while you are dressing."

Importunity will do a great deal with indolent people. Olive indolent! She had been wont to shew herself untirable, active, efficient, whenever there was any call for those qualities. Now she was turned into a fine lady. But she got up, an hour or more before her time. I rang for Martha, and the business of dressing began.

"Now what is this all about?" said Olive. "Go out? I cannot go out in such weather."

"Somebody came to see Mr. Iredell; and as I was the only member of the family visible, Harry brought the word to me."

"When?"

"Just at breakfast time. I found a man in the hall, whom I saw immediately to be a gentleman, but very poorly dressed and trembling with the cold. Literally, Olive; he had no overcoat."

"My dear, a great many people have no overcoat."

"What does the Bible say about that?"

"The Bible? I am sure I don't know. I didn't know it said anything about overcoats. Eastern people do not wear them."

"It says,—'Let him that hath two coats impart to him that hath none.'"

"Is that what you want of me?—to buy this man an overcoat?" said Olive facing round upon me.

"No. Do not interrupt Martha. I have not done my story. It was not only that he was ill dressed, Olive; but his face was haggard, pinched, thin and worn and grey—"

"An old man?"

"Not at all; in the prime of life, and very prepossessing; but in his eyes there was the dreadful look of a man pursued and run down by a wild beast."

"Where did you ever see a man run down by a wild beast?" said Olive drily.

"You have heard of 'keeping the wolf from the door,' haven't you? Well, this man had not been able to do that. The wolf was there."

"Drink, very likely," said Olive.

"Breakfast was just ready, and it flashed across me what to do. I told him to sit down, and I sent him out coffee and rolls and beef, and Harry served him as if he had been a prince."

"You gave him breakfast!"

"Certainly; there was nothing else to do. And when I went out again afterwards to speak to him, it was terrible, Olive, to see how his look had changed."

"Terrible. Had it not changed for the better?"

"Of course! but so much changed, that it let one see what need there had been. Then he told me, he had meant only to ask for work; but my kind-

ness (and I added mentally, my coffee) had heartened him so much that he would venture to tell me his story. He is an Irishman; his name is Riley; he can talk Irish; and he was invited and engaged by some clergymen of the Episcopal Church here to come out and take charge of some mission work among his countrymen. It was supposed that his speaking Irish would give him special advantages for the work. So he came out, with his wife, and here they are. But somehow his papers, his credentials, you know, were handed in to Dr. Odenwalder; Dr. Odenwalder has mislaid or overlooked them; and Mr. Riley can consequently get neither employment nor recognition. Consequently, he and his wife are starving."

"An unlikely story!" said Olive. "Why don't the man go to Dr. Odenwalder and ask him to hunt up the papers?"

"He has been, again and again, and cannot gain attention. He is regarded as a humbug."

"Probably with great justice."

"Olive, the man is starving."

"Well, Desire; I hope he does not deserve it, but it looks likely."

"Olive, the question must not go unsettled another day."

"What do you propose to do?"

"I want you to go and see Dr. Odenwalder. You know him, and he knows Mr. Iredell. He will not refuse *you*. Make him find the papers and right Mr. Riley."

"I do not believe there are any papers to find. If there had been, is it likely that a man like Dr. Odenwalder would have let them slip into his waste basket?"

"I hope they are not in his waste basket. But, Olive, you must go and see. Martha, bring Mrs. Iredell's breakfast as quickly as you can; and the carriage—when shall she order the carriage, Olive?"

"O it is too cold!" said Olive shrugging her shoulders and looking towards the window.

"Say, Olive! Tell Martha," I insisted. "Think of those two poor people without enough to eat, and such a day! And I want the carriage after you have done with it. I am going to look them up."

"I might write."

"It would not do, Olive; you must go. A note might easily be thrown aside; *you* would have to be attended to."

"I cannot go out before luncheon," said Olive looking at her watch. "I cannot indeed. Martha, let Sam have the carriage at the door at eleven. You may take it and do what you like, Desire; and go where you like; and after luncheon I will see how the weather is."

I could move Olive to no more than this. I got ready, and at eleven o'clock drove to Caroline's and told her my story. Sandie Birkenstall was at home, as it happened, nursing a sore throat; and he heard the story too. Caroline took it up, and agreed to go out with me to see Mrs. Riley; and

Mr. Birkenstall, after laughing at me a little, gave me ten dollars to use for the people, if their story proved true. But he did better for me than that.

"I know Dr. Odenwalder," said he; "and Dr. Odenwalder knows me, for I happen to be employed in a lawsuit of his. I will give you a note to him; and you had better go to him first of all, and settle the question of fraud or honesty; and then you will know better how to handle the distress. You and Caroline go together; Dr. Odenwalder will attend to you."

He wrote his note accordingly, and Caroline and I drove off.

We were happy in our choice of time, and were admitted at once to the doctor's study. What a place of comfort it was! The fierce weather found no entrance there; a gentle spring temperature filled the room; which was further filled with the most comfortable easy chairs and lounges, luxurious writing tables, books on tables and books around the walls, here a picture and there a marble bust. The doctor was in a very handsome dressing gown, tied with a silken cord, and had an odd little close cap upon his head; which it could not have needed for warmth in that atmosphere. On and under his table were papers enough to bury almost Mr. Riley himself, not to speak of Mr. Riley's fate.

He rose as we entered, alertly, as if expecting something to which he was accustomed; then his

face changed. No doubt he had thought to meet the eyes of some of his dutiful parishioners, come to consult him or seek aid from him, as I suppose they are wont to do. Seeing two strange ladies instead, ladies not known to him in his church, nor even in society, the doctor bowed slightly, thrust his hand behind him gathering up the tail of his dressing gown, and stood waiting.

Caroline apologized for disturbing him. He gave a little deprecatory wave of his free hand, and begged somewhat curtly to know how he could serve us. Still he was standing, and we also.

"We come to you, Dr. Odenwalder, about a somewhat curious affair," Caroline began. "It concerns a Mr. Riley."

"And me?" said the doctor.

"So he says. If his story is true, it concerns you certainly."

"It is probably not true, ladies."

"It is just our business, sir, to find out that. Caroline spoke with a little Chesterfield bluntness, I thought, though civilly enough.

"Have I the honour?"—said the doctor,—Mrs. Riley—?"

"No, sir; Mrs. Birkenstall. My husband is, I believe known to you."

"Birkenstall!"—and the doctor's tone was different;—"ha, indeed! Yes, I know my good friend, Mr. Birkenstall; he, I hope will be my very good friend in a lawsuit which is pending. Ladies, will you do me the honour to be seated; and now we

will investigate the subject of Mr. Riley. It is a common name enough; Irish, I think. What Riley is this?"

"I do not know his first name. But he is Irish; lately come over."

"Ah!—I wish he had not come over! We have too many of them now. How does this specimen gain his place in Mrs. Birkenstall's regards?"

The doctor was sitting comfortably back in his study chair now, eyeing us alternately, and winking his eyelids in a rather fast, peculiar fashion. Whether it were nervousness or impatience I was not decided.

"I do not know the man," said Caroline, imprudently and rashly; "I have never seen him. But his story has interested me. So much, that I have ventured on this disturbing of Dr. Odenwalder's time."

"My dear lady," said the doctor, "there is no end of the interesting stories that are told. If one will hear them all—"

"But one must hear some of them," Caroline put in.

"If they are accredited—if they are accredited," said the doctor. "I was about to remark, that if one will hear all the stories, there will be no time left to do anything else."

"We want to accredit Mr. Riley's."

"Ha! then you haven't done it yet?"

"We come to Dr. Odenwalder for that."

"Don't know the man, from Adam," said the

doctor, without in the least changing his position or his manner of winking at us.

"No, Mr. Riley does not pretend that he is known to you. But he says you have his papers."

"His papers! What papers?"

"Letters from England, accrediting him."

"As what, ladies? as what? Accrediting the man, to me, Dr. Odenwalder, as what?"

"To you and other clergymen of the Episcopal Church here, who have invited him to come over in the hope that his being able to speak to the Irish in their native language may make him a valuable help in your mission work among them."

"New York is the place for him," said the doctor. "We haven't half so many Irish here."

"But do you know nothing of the business?"

"Something of the business, perhaps, but of Mr. Riley nothing. I have received no papers—never heard his name, except in connection with others of his countrymen, who had no 'story.'"

"Mr. Riley affirms that his letters are in your hands and must have been mislaid."

"It is as easy to affirm that as anything," said the doctor. "Of course he has no proof. Ladies, a poor woman sent word to me last week that her husband was dead and she was in great distress; hadn't money to bury him. It was easy to affirm that, too. I sent one of our people to see after the case. It seemed all right; the place was a bare little place, the man in his coffin, the woman in

tears. So the messenger, one of our good ladies, gave her money and promised more. She found, when she had gone a few yards from the house, that she had left her glove behind her; she went back. Ladies, the woman's tears were dried, and the man was sitting up in his coffin, counting the money!"

I was shocked, but Caroline after a polite "Is it possible!" went on to remark that one gets hardened by such things.

"Just so! one gets hardened. I am hardened. So hardened, that your Mr. Riley's story makes no impression on the crust of my heart."

I saw we were not getting on. "Caroline," I said in a low tone, "you have not offered Sandie's note."

"This young lady is—?" said the doctor, eyeing me, but without stirring.

"My sister, Miss Burgoyne. It was she who saw Mr. Riley and heard his story."

"And believed it," said the doctor, still eyeing me. "She is not hardened. She never will be. Mr. Riley saw his advantage. Where did you see Mr. Riley, Miss Burgoyne?"

I was ready to laugh at the uncouth compliment, but answered with business gravity; that I was staying with my sister, Mrs. Iredell; that Mr. Riley had come to consult my brother-in-law; and that in Mr. Iredell's absence and my sister being not at hand, it had fallen to my lot to meet and hear the applicant.

"And all applicants?" asked the doctor. "Is not Mr. Iredell's absence answer enough?"

"Mr. Iredell sends no one away unheard," I replied.

"Don't see how he finds time,—" muttered the doctor.

"As his Master found it—" I ventured to say. "It is not a question of personal ease."

"I thought you would say that, or something like it," said the doctor, not at all ill-humouredly. "It is in your face, and all over you. Not hardened yet, as I said. Well, Miss—Burgoyne, was it? you heard Mr. Riley? And he made a good story of it?"

"His face and manner did, sir. There was the eloquence of starvation, and the emphasis of despair. His papers, he says, are and must be hid away and overlooked somewhere amid the confusion of yours; he can consequently get no work, and he and his wife are reduced to an extremity of want."

"A nice story," said the doctor, a little restlessly now. Indeed, ever since the bringing of Mr. Iredell's name into the business I had seen that its aspect had changed. "A nice story! Tell for me, wouldn't it, that my papers are no better looked after than that. Well, ladies, I'll tell you what I will do; and I will do it before I dine,—which secures you, for I set a good deal by my dinner,—I will turn over every paper in, on and under my table, till I find, or *don't* find, Mr. Riley's name.

It is proverbially hard to prove a negative—but I will do my utmost. I don't want Mr. Iredell coming about my ears. I know him."

Caroline presented her husband's note.

"All very well—all very well," said the doctor; "I am obliged to Mr. Birkenstall; but I'll do the thing anyhow and without his request. In mingled love and fear, I'll do it; fear of Mr. Iredell, and love for a fair face that is not hardened."

And smiling a little, bowing a good deal, the doctor bowed us out.

"Now to Mr. Riley's!" said I, and I gave the coachman the order.

"Desire," said Caroline, when we were in motion and fairly away, "I have done for you to-day what I will never do again, for anybody!"

"O yes, you will," I answered. "If there is ever so good occasion again. 'Love seeks not her own, Caroline."

"But there are limits—" said Caroline.

"Not to charity."

"To patience, there are!"

"Never mind," said I. "I am sure I had the worst of it. If he only finds those papers! I am certain they are there. Just see, Caroline, how one man's ease may be another man's ruin."

"The story is not proved yet," was Caroline's answer.

We were both intent upon that, and the silence was not broken till the carriage stopped. It was in a part of the city where Caroline and I had

never before been; and the aspect of things was not pleasant.

"Where in the world are we?" said she, looking out.

"This is where Mr. Riley lives."

"It is a poor lodging-house, I should judge."

"Yes, he told me so."

"You did not tell *me* so. How are we going in there, Desire? I don't like it."

"We can go as well as they can, I suppose," said I, getting out of the carriage and holding forth my hand to help Caroline. She emerged, casting an eye of doubt and dislike up and down the street, and at the row of buildings before one of which we stood. By the untidy entrance way, the open door, the soiled walls, the broken window panes here and there, the forlorn, unkept appearance everywhere, one could see only too plainly that it was a house that had no home in it, only a number of indwellers.

"I don't like to go in here, Desire!"

"People have to live here, Caroline,"

"That is just it! I would not mind if it were empty. But people have fevers, and all sorts of things; and it is so dirty!—"

"Come!" said I. "If people can live here, we can afford to look at it."

I went in, and Caroline followed, doubtfully. We went up one flight of stairs, and knocked. I had expected a little bettering of the aspect of things when the door should open; and within it was certainly broom clean; but alas, it was also like a place

swept bare. Besides the two human beings we had come to see, the room had hardly anything in it. A poor bed, on which no blankets could be supposed, from the look of it and from the fact that one or two articles of wearing apparel lay across it, evidently doing duty as covering; a very few very poor chairs; an apology for a washstand; that was about all. One or two trunks were visible. Mrs. Riley lay in the bed.

Caroline was so much startled and confused at the sight of all this, and at the contrast it presented with the very well looking and well mannered man who received us there, that as she told me afterwards she hardly knew which way to look. I left her to talk to him, while I went up to the bed. Ah me, what anxious eyes met mine! what a worn, hungry face! I could hardly keep from bursting into tears.

"How do you do, Mrs. Riley?" I said, taking her hand.

She answered that she was not very well; and as she spoke a shiver ran over her.

"You are ill?" said I, "or is it the cold of this terrible day?" And I saw there was no pretence of fire anywhere. I saw it with horror.

"I am not ill, I think.—I think it is the extreme weather," she answered. "Isn't the weather extreme?"

"Fearfully cold! I have come to bring you, I hope, good news. Dr. Odenwalder will at least look over his papers to find your husband's let

ters; and if they are there he *will* find them. But we will not wait for that, to make you more comfortable. Keep up a good heart, in the mean time. I am going to get something to warm you."

I would not wait another minute, but drew Caroline away; first putting in Mr. Riley's hands Sandie Birkenstall's ten dollars and begging him to get coals and have a fire immediately and get out of pawn anything they might specially require. Then I ran down stairs, ordered the coachman, and in a minute we were driving off again.

"What now?" said my sister. "That was what I call a short visit! But you hurried me so, I could not ask what you meant. What do you mean?"

"We are going back again; we'll finish the visit then," I replied.

"Back again!" cried Caroline. "To that place?"

"Of course. We could not leave them so. Did you see that woman's face? I cannot get my breath freely till I see it with a different look upon it."

"But we can do nothing till Dr. Odenwalder finds the papers."

"Yes, we can. We can keep her from dying of cold and starvation." And a sob had like to have choked me. "You could not go home, Caroline, and eat your dinner, with the thought of those two hungry faces?"

"I suppose," Caroline said discontentedly, "if I

knew all the hungry people there are and had the thought of their faces before me, I could not eat at all! The only way is, not to see what you can't help. There is no use in it."

"See all you can," said I shortly.

"But I cannot help all, Desire."

"You can do more than you think; if you want to do it."

"And what are we stopping here for?" she said, as the carriage again stood still. It was before the door of a large restaurant.

"Wait a moment and you shall see."

"O I will not wait in the carriage," said Caroline, following me out of it. "The weather is too bitter. Such a day for such work!"

"The very day for it," I answered joyously, pushing open the restaurant door; and I proceeded to give an order for coffee, bread, cold roast chicken and potatoes.

"Are you going to take this down there?" said Caroline. I nodded.

"Beefsteak would be better."

"Couldn't have it hot. Cold beefsteak is no good."

Caroline smiled, and seeing that she was as she expressed the matter, "in for it," she invested some quarters in cake and pies. I left a pledge for the return of the dishes, had all packed in a basket, and we set off again. But I stopped at a grocery and purchased also tea and sugar and one or two other little things; then we went on.

Mr. Riley had minded his business, as I had minded mine; for he had got a fire kindled, and the place looked by so much more heartsome. Now Caroline and I spread napkins, which I had also provided, over the bed and upon a chair; I managed to warm up the coffee; and then we had the joy of seeing it tasted by lips that, I am afraid, had tasted nothing before that day. Mr. Riley had had his breakfast, I knew; but to common men breakfast does not do away with the need of dinner; and he was hungry again by this time. But I think, all the salt he took to his food was not in the shape of crystals. I think some tears went in. O joy of ministry! is there anything like it in all the wide world?

"Well," said Caroline, as we were at last driving away, "that will do for one day!"

"No," said I, "there is more yet."

"What, pray?"

"We must get those people into a decent lodging."

"But, Desire, do you manage to keep warm?"

"I don't know," said I laughing. "I have not thought of it."

"Have you no conscience about Mr. Iredell's horses and servant?"

"I sent Sam to get his dinner while we were at Mr. Riley's. O Mr. Iredell never forgets his servants, I have learned that. He is muffled in furs, besides. Sam, I mean."

"But won't you wait to hear whether Dr. Odenwalder finds the papers?"

"We cannot move the Rileys to-day. But I want to have things ready. Dr. Odenwalder will find the papers. Didn't you hear? he 'does not want Mr. Iredell after him.'"

"Desire," said my sister after a pause, "this is all very well, what you have done to-day; and I am not at all sorry to have been with you; if I don't catch a fearful cold, that is. But I go back to what I was saying. It seems to me, you and Mr. Iredell carry things to an extreme. I could not do this every day; and you could not."

"I do not. I am not sure,—perhaps *he* does."

"Well, it is too much."

"What is too much?"

"This trying to help everybody."

"No, Caroline, it is not that. Only everybody you know."

"But you cannot do it."

"Why not?"

"Without giving up your life to it, that is; and most of us have something else to do."

"Nobody ought to do what he cannot," said I. "If you do what you *can*, Caroline—that is enough."

"But that is a very vague word," said Caroline uneasily. "How can one tell what one *can?*"

"I don't know," said I seriously. "I am beginning to think it is one of the most tremendous questions there are. 'She hath done what she could!' I should like that to be said of me."

"I am sure it might be said of you to-day," Caroline answered.

"Not till I have found a decent lodging for those poor people to move into to-morrow morning."

"Desire, if you take the words *literally* so, then nobody does what he could."

"I am beginning to think it."—With the exception perhaps of Mr. Iredell, I added in my thought.

"Then the words must not be taken literally so, don't you see?"

"No, I don't see. How do you see it?"

"Why, Desire, at that rate, *nobody* does what he can. Nobody does what he ought."

"You think the words must be accommodated to the people,—not the people conformed to the words?"

"I do not think anything absurd. But you are simply requiring an impossibility."

"Are not we to follow Christ—if we are Christians?"

"Yes."

"Did he spare himself? Did he turn away any that applied? Did he stop for weariness, or even sometimes for necessary food? O Caroline, he '*pleased not himself*'; and that is what we are all bent on doing."

"Don't you think there are duties to society, and to one's family?"

"These are our duties to society, I think. To 'lift the heavy burdens,'—how is it the words run?—'and let the oppressed go free; and that ye break every yoke; when thou seest the hungry,

that thou feed him, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thine house.'—I may not have the words exactly, but I know they are in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, something like that."

"But there is Society; what I mean by Society," said Caroline; "you leave all that out."

"Who gave you authority to set it up and make an idol of it?"

"I do not make an idol of it!"

"And make sacrifices to it"—I went on, not heeding her.

"I do not make sacrifices to it."

"O Caroline! Stop and think."

"What sacrifices?"

"Time and money."

"What time and money? Do you mean, visiting my friends?"

"And dressing to visit them; and inviting them to your house to visit you, and preparing an entertainment for them when they come."

"And you would not do all that?" cried Caroline. "And what would become of Society, upon your plan?"

"Ay, what would become of it?" said I sadly. "There would be no hungry without food, and none starved for want of fire. There would be no industrious poor without work. There would be no miserable sick uncared for. There would be no tenement houses. There would be fewer prisons, and I guess, no penitentiaries. It seems to me, Society would be better off."

"What would become of our rich friends?"

"You would see them as friends, when they *were* friends; and when they were merely rich people, you would let them alone."

"And you would not make an entertainment for them; never give a party, a dinner, or a supper?"

"Not because they were rich or fashionable. Christ says not. You forget, Caroline, it is not *I* that make the rules, Jesus said. 'When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy rich friends'—."

"We should have to new furnish all our houses, then," said Caroline scornfully.

"I suppose you would. So a great deal of money would be set free, you see, to do better work."

"And of course we should dress in homespun."

'There would be some saving in that direction," I drily allowed.

"What would become of all the tradespeople who supply us?"

"They would supply you still, I suppose; only with different things."

"How come you to be the only wise one, among so many? did you ever think of that?"

"Not because I am really either better or wiser than other people," I said. "But I suppose, being out of the whirl, I can see; and my ears not being deafened with the cry of the world, I can hear the words of the Master. O Caroline, I hear them! and they sound sweet to me; and I wish you heard them."

"And what do you think Mr. Birkenstall would say, if I heard them in your sense?"

"There is another question, Caroline; and it seems to me a prior question. What will the Lord say, if you don't?"

The carriage stopped at Caroline's door; for she had declared she could go no further with me. She left me with a curt good bye; and I went on my way alone. It happened that I knew where to go. I had heard Olive speak of a nice poor woman, a dressmaker, who had part of her house to let. To her I went; found an empty flat which would do admirably; made conditional arrangements with her, and returned home to await news from Dr. Odenwalder.

Olive was only faintly interested in my story; and averred she had had enough to do to keep warm where she was, and she wondered how I had existed. Her sympathies were with me in my fur cape; not with the unsheltered misery I had gone to relieve. So it is; people sympathize with what they know, not with what they don't know. In Chesterfield there is no such suffering to be even heard of; and here my sister is transformed into a fine lady, and does not touch the outer world. The bite of hunger, the palsy of cold, are things she cannot imagine. It is a true saying of somebody, that many are cruel, not from hardness of heart but from want of imagination. I can see that her prosperity is not good for her.

We dressed and dined, and were sitting at work

in the evening, when a note was brought to me. Seal and monogram—I guessed whom it was from.

"*St. Bede's Rectory,*
Jan. 17, 18—.

"My dear Miss Burgoyne,

"I am a great sinner! and feel that on this occasion I must make my confession at your shrine. Obedient to your well urged petition, I have gone into the Herculæan task of clearing—not the Augæan stables, but what is worse,—my baskets of papers. Every possible variety of irrelevant thing and subject came thereby under my hand; disclosing an amount of work undone and that ought to be done, which I am sure would have moved Hercules in my place to contemplate the problem of self-destruction. You observe, I do not compare myself with Hercules except in moral strength, wherein I never heard that the old demi-god was distinguished; so I cannot be charged with self-laudation. But the point which will interest you is, that I came at length upon Mr. Riley's papers; all of them, I judge; full and true as he described them to you, and establishing perfectly his story and his claim. His story it will be a mortification to me always to remember; his claim we shall be happy immediately to acknowledge; and will put him at once into the station and office which he was invited here to fill, and which I have good hope he will fill worthily. With such a patron saint, how can he fail?

"Pray forgive my troubling you with the request to send Mr. Riley to me, or if you please, his address. That little item was forgotten in our business transaction this morning. Knowing Mr. Iredell's, as who does not? I flatter myself that I shall not go wrong in addressing you there. Let the mantle of your charity, which I am sure is a generous garment, be thrown over the sins of

"Your very humble and obliged servant,

"GUSTAVUS ODENWALDER."

So that business is disposed of. I was much amused by the doctor's note, and Olive was as much mystified by it.

Feb. 20.

THAT was a beginning of doing Mr. Iredell's work, which has stretched on into a good deal of activity, of the same sort. I had soon no more care for Mr. Riley. After seeing him and his wife moved into their new quarters, and provided with a few things needful for the moment, I could leave that piece of machinery to run itself. Mr. Riley was accepted by his brother clergymen, put in office, well paid, and set to work; and both he and his wife brightened up into good looks and happy living. I have had no other case of such peculiar interest or such brilliant issue, perhaps·

but almost every day brings applicants of one sort and another, telling each his different story of perplexity or pain. It is good to relieve perplexity! and it is better yet to soften away pain. I do it sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, yet generally do it. Not with the spending of much money either; often a very little will serve, like a drop of oil upon the clogged wheels of the social machine, and lo! it is in running order again. Sometimes no money at all is called for; but a little time and sympathy and influence exerted in the right place. When mine is not enough I make Olive or Caroline come into the breach. And so, day after day, I am busy in the sweetest possible way. I have time enough too for all my own needs; and the constant stir of interest and action keeps me fresh for study and ready for enjoyment of every enjoyable thing that offers. Dr. Odenwalder one night expressed his apprehension that we must be run down with applications; but I explained to him that all go first through the hands of Mr. Iredell's special agent or man of business; and it is only such cases as he has ascertained to be genuine that are allowed to come to Mr. Iredell himself for treatment. Harry announces no such applicant who does not come provided with a note or ticket of credit from this agent. Dr. Odenwalder opened his eyes, I thought, though they have seen so much of the world that they are habitually wide open, and muttered "System!"

"Nothing to be done without system, Mr. Iredell says."

"And Mr. Iredell's fair substitute! But ladies so young, do not generally learn lessons so old."

I did not tell him how I had learned system in my dairy at home long ago.

But I have found that in all this activity I have been describing, there lurks for me a subtle temptation. It delights me that I can do and am doing Mr. Iredell's work. The thought comes to me with insidious sweetness, after one and another case is disposed of, that Mr. Iredell would be pleased; that I am carrying on what he wants done; I am, in a sort, his servant; and it seems to me there is nothing I would rather be. I caught myself in some such thought lately, and reckoned with myself about it. This will not do; this is not right, in any view of it. I ought to feel just all that *for Christ's sake;* the joy of doing what *he* wants done, the privilege of being *his* servant, the delight of pleasing *him;* and here am I putting another name for his, and forgetting the real relations of things, even letting another affection overtop and throw into shadow the love which nothing should dim and nothing should hide. Ay, it is even so. I suppose, in Mr. Iredell's absence I have thought myself safe, and let myself go in a certain hidden indulgence of feeling. His image encounters me in all corners of the house; I think as I cross the threshold of the dining room, Here his foot steps;

in the hall I always imagine him coming or going; in the library his presence is in his chair; at the dinner-table his place is in fancy filled. I did not know I was doing this, did not know it for some time. I have determined what I must do. I will be gone before the master of the house comes back; and I will never stay in this house again. As soon as his letters give us warning to expect his return, I shall fly. I am very deeply ashamed of myself, but flight in this instance is the best bravery. I am not at all in the state of mind I was in at Mrs. Bowdoin's, before Olive's marriage; all *that* is over; I am quiet and content; but I find my heart is alive on that side, and I must run away. I wonder why things are twisted and tied so together in this world, things that have no actual and proper connection? But there, I suppose, I am begging the question. They *have* an inner connection, no doubt; no doubt this special experience of mine is meant to make a better servant of me; more wholly and heartily devoted to Christ, than I should be perhaps if my human life had what it wanted. Now, I think, I am all his. I think there is nothing kept back, but my Lord has my whole heart. I am sure I agree to all his arrangements for me and am satisfied.

Feb. 22.

I PLUNGE into work all I can. The weather continues very severe. So hard a winter has not been known, they say, in thirty years. To-day it was very bitter. Coming out of a shop this morning, at the door I encountered an old woman offering emery bags for sale. I stopped and bought one, and glanced at the woman's face. It was pinched with cold, and had besides that wan, peculiar look that comes from want of food. I asked her if she had a good sale for her wares?

"Not very," she answered. "This is the first sixpence I have taken to-day. I am thankful to you."

Something in her appearance touched me. "Come in," said I opening the shop door again, "it is too cold to talk here. Come in and let me speak to you. Have you nobody at home to help you, and nothing better to do than this?"

So she told me her story. She had been well off once, and belonged to a respectable family; had two sons, well brought up. One went to sea, and came not again. The other, after a series of vicissitudes, got a position and work in this city as a scribe, and sent for his mother to come and live with him. She is not a Philadelphian. She came, and for a while things went well; they had a comfortable little home and were happy. Then she fell ill, and he lost work attending to her. After weeks she recovered; and soon after, worn with privation and fatigue, for he had worked fearfully hard and

gone without proper sleep, the son took to his bed. It was the mother's turn to watch and wait; but as she could not also write and earn money, she was forced to apply to the pawnbrokers. So went one thing after another, one thing after another; and with all, she could not give her boy sufficient nourishment, nor the almost as much needed repose of mind and rest of nerve. He failed continually; then died; and the expenses of those days swallowed up whatever was left. Mrs. Palimpset had taken, in despair, to making emery bags and other little articles, and could dispose of them only by standing in the street. She told all this with quiet patience; hardly a tear escaped her; she said she knew the Lord was good and would not let her starve; she was trusting in him.

"What have you on?" said I suddenly taking hold of her clothes, which hung limp around her "Have you no flannel, in this weather?"

"It had to go," she answered quietly. "My boy —wanted—something—"

She got no further, and I waited for no more, but pulled her into an inner room of the shop; which was a little thread and needle store where I often dealt. Here I stripped off my flannel petticoat and obliged her to put it on. She made much objection, but I looked at my fur cape and could not have endured my flannel petticoat another minute. "Now," said I, "come with me."

I took her into the carriage and drove to the address she gave me. A poor house, but decent

outwardly. We went up stairs to the garret room. Here she lived. And it was bare; utterly bare; no fire, no bed; everything had gone to the pawnbroker. And here this old woman lived alone! O me, I thought my heart would stand still. I made her hand over to me her pawn tickets, gave her money to get a dinner, and drove home.

There I found Ernestine Forella, come to luncheon. I had not seen her for weeks; she having been in New York nearly all the time I have been here. I told my story; adding that Olive must give me some money, for my stock was out.

"What are you going to do?" said Olive.

"Make her comfortable."

"But, Desire, you cannot make everybody comfortable."

"I'll just do all in that line I can. If you will do as much, and Miss Forella the same, there will be quite a good deal more comfort in the world."

"I never made anybody comfortable in my life," said Ernestine.

"How much money do you want?" said Olive.

"I do not know. She has *nothing*."

"In that case it will take an amount to supply her."

"Less than you think. She will do without Persian carpets."

"But how long do you suppose *I* should have any carpets at all, if I tried to fill every pocket I find empty?"

"I don't want you to fill her pockets. She will

try to do that, at least, for herself. But you and Miss Forella must help sell her emery bags and things. That you can do."

Ernestine was greatly amused by this proposal. Olive declared that I was "crazy."

"That is what the world always says of those who do not follow it," I remarked.

"Well," said Ernestine, "people must be crazy *not* to follow it. That fact is a sign that they are out of their wits."

"One side or the other—" I said.

"It is likely that an individual here and there should be right, and all the rest of the world wrong!" said Olive.

"Don't you know that the Bible says, 'If any man will be wise in this world, *let him become a fool that he may be wise.*'"

"You interpret that to suit yourself, of course."

"Olive, I am *only* obeying the Lord's command—'that thou deal thy bread to the hungry; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him.'—"

"Yes, this time it is my bread," said Olive. "Besides, I have calls to make this afternoon. I shall want the carriage. I do not know if that will affect your plans."

"Then I must walk," I said. "And yet, I do not know how I can, it is so far. Calls can wait, Olive? I *must* have the carriage for a couple of hours."

"And I will go with you!" cried Ernestine. "It is pinching cold, but I must see the fun. I have

got some money, and I'll help, Desire. Will you let me go along with you?"

I fancied she had her own ends to serve, as indeed it turned out; but of course I accepted her company and her contribution together. From Olive I got further supplies as a loan to Mr. Iredell,—which seemed to me comical enough, as it all comes from him,—and immediately after luncheon Ernestine and I set out. I went down first to the kitchen and asked the old cook, who like Harry, has been a long time in Mr. Iredell's service and knows his ways, for a basketful of things, "for one of Mr. Iredell's people." She knows what that means; and I received some cold boiled beef, some nice legs and wings of fowls left from the table, half an apple pie, some potatoes and apples, and a few smoked herring. The basket went inside the Clarence, with Ernestine and me, somewhat to her disgust.

"You know I am learning from you how to be good," she said. "Now is this part of the lesson?"

"What?"

"This basket. Can't one ride in a carriage without a basket of provisions at one's feet?"

"Not if the provisions and you have to go at the same time."

"Dreadful! And one mustn't be dressed, I suppose?"

"Depends on what the word means to you," I answered laughing.

"What does it mean to you?"

"In this weather? My fur cape and a warm bonnet and gloves."

"That's a splendid cape!" said Ernestine; "it's so nice and big, and it's beautiful fur. Did Olive give it to you?"

"Yes."

"She's pretty good, I think. You needn't complain of her. *I* wouldn't, of anybody that gave me such a cape as that. It looks like Mr. Iredell's doing. I know him, you see. He has tried to make me good so often; but he never gave me anything. I am afraid I should never do for benevolence! Can one wear a silk dress, for instance, when one does this work? and are kid gloves out of place? I can't live without kid gloves. You've got fur-lined gloves? Comfortable, but so ugly! They make your hands look such monsters. I cannot bear them. Will kid gloves do, Desire?"

"Old ones, and dark ones, if you can keep your hands warm."

"Old and dark? why?"

"You are apt to go where light ones would be soon spoiled; and they do not look fitting, either."

"But *old?*" insisted Ernestine.

"Old will do, and it's economy."

"Economy! How I hate it. And you do not care for economy. See what sums you have been calling for to-day."

"I am not going to spend one penny more than

just must be spent. But this poor old woman has nothing but bare walls around her, Ernestine."

"I cannot imagine it," said Ernestine shrugging her shoulders.

No, she could not; and her power of imagination, I could see, grew in the course of the doings of that afternoon. We drove first to the pawnbroker's. But here I found that Mrs. Palimpset's goods were mostly outlawed and had been sold. So at least the man assured me; if he spoke truth or not I had no means of determining. From there we went to a dealer in second-hand furniture. Here I procured a bedstead and bed, two chairs, a strong little table, a stove, a tea kettle, a boiler and a frying pan. Next I went to a grocer's and laid in a small supply of articles immediately wanted; tea and sugar, bread and butter, a little cheese and some more herring, and potatoes. Then I ordered in a small quantity of coals and kindling wood.

"What next?" Ernestine asked, as I came back to the carriage.

"I am going to put her room in order."

"O!—Is it a clean place?"

"Pretty well."

"May I go?"

"Certainly."

I had ordered the things sent immediately and promised a fee; so when I got to the house I found the warehouse van there before me. Mrs. Palimpset was not at home, of which I was very glad. I

arranged things to my liking; had the little stove put up; hired the boy that brought the coals to kindle a fire and fill the kettle for me, having first got it washed by the woman down stairs. I forgot to say I had gone to a hardware store and got a couple of plates and cups and saucers and tea pot and knives and spoons; how many things are necessary for the simplest beginning of civilized life!—and these articles I washed, as soon as the water was hot. Meanwhile I hired the aforesaid woman to wash out a cupboard in the room and help me put up the bedstead; and after an hour's brisk work I had the little room tidy, warm, comfortable, with the table set and a supply of good things upon it. Ernestine had lingered, watching me and my activity, with a face expressing interest, scorn, and astonishment by turns. But interest grew and scorn abated.

"Desire, I wish you could give me a cup of tea!" she said at last. "And that pie looks good enough to eat!"

"You cannot have it," said I. "And as for the tea, I am not at home, you know."

"Nonsense!"

"What is nonsense?"

"Such punctilio. It is all yours."

"No, not since I have given it. And I have not given it either. The money is not mine."

"Well, some of it was mine," said Ernestine, "and I think that entitles me to a cup of tea. I am tired and thirsty. Really, Desire."

"You shall have it, as soon as Mrs. Palimpset comes home."

"When will she come?"

"I do not know. Soon, I hope, for it is growing late and cold."

She was coming, as I spoke. We heard the slow, weary step ascending the last flight of stairs; and my heart filled with such joy as those never knew who never tasted it, thinking what she was coming to that she did not expect. She opened the door, and stood still. I think she thought she had missed her way; but then I went forward and took her hand.

It was almost too much. When she saw what I had been doing, she was too choked to speak, or even to cry; she sat down and covered her face with her hands. Ernestine again looked in scornful astonishment at the old coal-skuttle bonnet which hid the old woman's face, and which dated from I cannot tell what date of past fashion; but I was filled with a great tenderness for the bowed heart there. I let her be for a little while; then I put my hand on her shoulder and asked her cheerfully if she would not give us a cup of tea?

"Tea?" she said bewildered, looking up.

"Yes," I said; "I have some tea here, and the kettle is boiling; shall I make it?"

She lifted her two hands and let them fall upon her knees, which I suppose with such people is the gesture which answers to an exclamation point; and I waited no further answer, but went on to

make the tea, and then poured it out and gave her a cup. Ernestine I served with the other. Miss Forella tasted hers, doubtfully, as never having made acquaintance with tea in such cups before, then declared it was good and drank it off. But Mrs. Palimpset sat and looked at the table and at the stove, and did nothing, till I took up the cup and held it to her and bade her drink. That finished her; she swallowed half of it, set down the cup, and burst into tears. I thought it was best then to leave her to herself, and I carried Miss Forella away.

"Where's the carriage?" she exclaimed. "It isn't here."

"It is gone home. Do you think I would leave the man and the horses standing in the cold all this while?"

"That's awfully mean of you. We shall have to walk all the way home."

"It will not hurt either of us."

"Well, I'm not sorry I went with you. I never saw such a lark in my life."

"Will you go and see her again, and comfort her up, now and then?"

"I? I expect to be in the poor-house myself. I haven't got any more money."

"You can give comfort, without giving money."

"Can you? It is the only thing that comforts *me*."

"Then I am afraid you do not know much about the article."

"I tell you what; I think Mr. Iredell has made one mistake in his life. I do believe you can give comfort, Desire, even without cups of tea; and that cup of tea was so good! I believe I should like the English fashion of five o'clock teas. Well, good bye. I am sorry our ways divide; but I suppose they always will!"

So I had a brisk walk home alone, which I enjoyed.

March 5.

MR. RILEY has been quite a frequent visiter here, ever since he was delivered from his difficulties. Olive likes him, and he certainly is a pleasant man and a pleasant talker. Last night he was here, and Dr. Odenwalder also came in. The latter is a peculiar person, but he too can be extremely agreeable. He is a scholar, and a travelled man; and when he chooses can bring forth a great deal of precious material from his various stores. A few days ago Olive and I each had the surprise of a gift from Mr. Iredell; how kind he is, to remember me!—in the shape of two books by Mr. Ruskin. Olive's is the "Queen of the Air," mine "St. Mark's Rest." I was reading it when Dr. Odenwalder came in; and as Olive was occupied with Mr. Riley, he came and sat down by me. He found out what I was reading, and I confessed my ignorance of architecture and architectural terms.

Now Dr. Odenwälder is learned in ecclesiastical lore of all kinds, and architecture among the rest. He began to explain and illustrate with his pencil. Then I remembered a portfolio of exquisite architectural views in the library, and fetched it. The doctor was charmed with them; and now he explained and illustrated at length and in detail. Nave and transept, choir and screen, vaulting and groining, cusps and brackets, clerestories and chantries, and stalls, buttresses, piers, columns and arches; what did he not tell me! And not a bare dictionary of terms, but he explained how things came to be, what they grew from, how they developed; and "Byzantine," and "Romanesque" and "Transition" and "Gothic," were terms that recurred again and again. I am afraid there was too much in his lecture to be all remembered; but there was a great deal to be enjoyed. After the gentlemen were gone I still sat studying the photographs and thinking; and at last I said, suddenly breaking the silence which had set in,

"I begin to see, that all the fine arts are only different ways of saying the same things?"

"What *are* you thinking of?" said Olive.

"The fine arts—all of them—with special application to architecture."

"I never could see anything in architecture," returned Olive. "It is only a way of building."

"You might say that poetry is only a way of putting words together, as well."

"I might, and I should. What more is it?"

"Thoughts, I should say."

"Well, expressed by words."

"And architecture is thoughts expressed by lines."

"Thoughts in lines!" exclaimed Olive contemptuously.

"Yes. I am so glad I can see it."

"What thoughts do you read in the architecture of this blessed city, for instance?"

"It is manifest that none can be read where none were written. I was thinking of noble architecture, of the times that are past, especially; what you have in this portfolio. But words may be masoned together, as well as stones, and be as dead as they. And architecture records facts, I suppose, as well as thoughts. Oh how beautiful, how beautiful!—"

"What?"

"This abbey of Rivaulx, built in the twelfth century."

"What thoughts do you see there?" inquired Olive, bending over curiously to look at the photograph.

"It was built by the Cistercian monks, I think, in the palmy days of their order, when it was full of the influence of Bernard of Cluny. I think I heard Mr. Iredell say so; and now I begin to understand it."

"What do you understand?"

"The power of mind upon stone; at least I think I do. Can't you see in those beautiful old lines

some trace of the purity and severity, and love of truth, and beauty of it, that was in them?"

"In those old monks!" cried Olive. "They were the corruptest—"

"Afterwards, afterwards; they deteriorated soon enough; but just at first, with Bernard of Cluny at their head, they were not so. And so their architecture changed too."

"So Mr. Iredell knew you were fond of architectural studies?" said Olive; "and that is why he sent you that book—chose it, I mean?"

The tone of her voice struck me.

"I do not think the book is exactly about architecture," I said. "You were so busy with Mr. Riley, you did not hear our conversation this evening, at the other side of the room."

Silence.

"Mr. Riley finds this a pleasant place to come, judging by the frequency of his visits."

"Judging by the same rule, so does Dr. Odenwalder."

"Does he come so often? I believe he does."

"Why, Desire, you need not affect not to know it."

"I need not, certainly. Why should I?"

"I did not know but you were playing modest, like other girls."

"*Playing* modest!" I exclaimed. "Do you think I am not modest in truth? And in this case, what is there to be modest about?"

"To be proud of, then, if you like it better."

"What is there to be proud of?"

"Again, Desire! What are you doing now, but counterfeiting?"

"You must tell me what, for I am in the dark."

"Most girls would be proud, to have drawn down Dr. Odenwalder to their feet."

"Dr. Odenwalder? He does not come to see me."

"He does not come to see *me*," said Olive; "and though he says this is such a quaint old house, I do not think he comes to study architecture. Do you?"

"Olive—Olive," I said in amazed horror,—"you do not seriously mean what you say?"

"Any fool could see it!" returned my sister. "I am just wondering how long he will explain the church before he asks you to step in and look at the altar."

I sat still for a bit, searching back in my memory and trying to find therein proof or denial of my sister's assertion. And as I searched, I felt myself gradually growing hot.

"I am very glad you told me," I said at last. "I will make my arrangements, and go home at once."

Olive echoed my words.

"Yes," I said. "There is nothing else left for me to do."

"What *should* you go home for?"

"I have been away a long time. I must go home, and take care of grandma," I said.

"Yes, but not just now? She is well enough off."

"I guess she would be glad to see me."

"But, Desire, what has grandma to do with the matter? You are not thinking of grandma."

This was true, so I kept silence.

"What I want to know is, what you *are* thinking of?"

"I suppose—what you told me just now."

"You did not know it before?"

"Certainly not," said I, facing her.

"You are a most singular girl! It seems to me, that is rather a reason why you should stay, than why you should go."

"I do not see it in that light. Mr. Iredell speaks in his last letter as if his business were done. Write at once, Olive, and tell him you are going to be left alone, and he will come home."

"Why, when do you expect to go?"

"This is Monday? I must leave you Friday, then. That will let me get home before Sunday."

"I never heard anything quite so absurd!" Olive exclaimed. "What is the matter? This may be all a fancy of mine about Dr. Odenwalder."

"I hope it is fancy," I answered.

"But suppose it were not fancy, Desire; suppose it were true; what then?"

"Then I would run away—as I am going to do."

"Run away, from what?"

"From the terrible pain of having to disappoint hopes that I had, even unconsciously, allowed to be raised. No woman that has a soul in her will do that, if she can help it."

"What do you know about it?" said Olive curiously. "Are you speaking from experience?"

"One can know so much as that, without going through it," I answered evasively.

"Whom did you ever disappoint so?"

"Olive—I cannot tell you."

"Anybody—Not anybody that I know?"

She spoke with some difficulty. I reassured her on that point.

"Then, Desire," she said, evidently breathing freer again, "wait and see. Why, child, do you know what a match Dr. Odenwalder is? Rich and looked up to, a beautiful house, good family, a magnificent church; he stands as high as any name you can name in the city."

"Do you think I would marry a *name*, Olive?" I asked.

"But house and fortune, Desire."

"Do you think I would marry a house? Or a fortune either?"

"Well, you need not look at me so. Most women would think themselves happy to be able to do it."

"Olive, I think the way women, young and old, in what you call the world,—look at that subject, and talk about it, and act upon it, is simply horrible! There is neither truth nor honour nor delicacy in it; as for love, it does not come into question; they do not know what it means; and I don't believe in those circumstances there is any birdlime on the bush that will catch happiness."

Olive coloured high. How I had touched her, or offended her, I did not know; so made no effort to mend it. She was silent for awhile; then remarked in a different tone—

"All that comes of living in the mountains, out of the world!"

"Then I am thankful for the mountains," I answered.

"My dear, do you expect never to marry?"

"I never take up the question."

"One of the things I wanted to get you to Philadelphia for, was that you might have a chance."

"Thank you," said I; "but I have not seen anybody to tempt me yet."

"And now, if you lose this chance, and go back to Chesterfield, you may never have another; and you'll die an old maid."

"This is not a 'chance,'" said I. "And Olive, Olive,—life is not to be married or to be unmarried, but to do the will of God."

"You have got one of Mr. Iredell's sayings there," said Olive; and I said no more.

March 12. *At Chesterfield.*

SO here I am home again.

I got off Friday, as I had proposed; though Olive did her best to detain me. She argued and persuaded, and her persuasions were far worse than her arguments; and when nothing would do to

keep me, she tried to make me wait till Mr. Iredell should return. But that was what I specially desired to avoid; the more because my secret wishes were so strong for it. Just because I wanted so to see him again, I knew I must not; and so I got off Friday morning by an early train.

I kept repeating to myself Mr. Iredell's sentence all the way; using it as a walking staff, holding it up before my eyes as a screen, taking it to my heart as a breastplate. And so the long journey was made; the very rumble of the car wheels seeming to be set to that music. So I got home.

I left the Philadelphia streets clean, but the valley and the hills here are full of snow yet. Saturday afternoon was very bright and frosty, the footing good, and I chose to walk from the end of the valley. It gave me a good time to think and to get accustomed to things. For everywhere I saw and felt the contrast with what lately had been my life; and at every other step I had to swallow down my repugnance to something. Yet I love Chesterfield, and I know the beauties of it; and I was deeply, heartily, inwardly glad to have broken away from Philadelphia and got safe back. But in the life I had left was almost everything I like; and I knew, I knew, I had done with it from henceforth. Not to go deeper; art and literature and cultivation, and the graces of social life, and the fire of mental activity, and the fruits of scholarly learning, and the stir of intellectual converse,—I had left them; and I loved them. I knew it now,

as I was walking through the snow to take up my old way of life again; and my mind had to make a leap, beyond circumstances, above the things immediately present and pressing, to find a resting-place. I remembered I had still the beauty of my hills, and the joy of some books, always of the Bible at least, and communion with that One who is the embodiment of all beauty and the source of all life. I remembered the words,—"Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory;"—and I thought, whoever has *that* means of growth at command need not complain of being at a stand-still. Speaking of my books, I confess it came to me with a little sting of pain, that I had been obliged to leave my "St. Mark's Rest" with Olive. She wanted to read it, she said, and had not got through with it. Neither have I brought home my little beautiful St. Cecilia, nor my "Black Brunswicker." Olive said this last was wanted as a companion to her "Huguenot," and begged me to let her keep it for me; and the statuette she said is much safer where it is, and she would be at a loss what to put in its place if I took it away. It lies on a side table in the drawing room. So I have come home without either one of my special treasures. Perhaps it is just as well.

It is a little hard, this sort of coming home, when everything your eye falls upon gives you an unwelcome impression. The little foot-beaten path from the gate to the door, even that reminded me that I

had left the region of beautiful order. At Mr. Iredell's the path would have been clean shovelled and brushed. No such niceties here. And when I opened the house door, the figure that first met my eyes gave me a sort of shock. Yet it was a figure I knew well enough and had seen often before.

I had left grandmother in the care of a distant relation, whom we call "cousin." Her name is Arethusa, and her family name Hildreth. She is poor, and the invitation to come and spend the winter in Chesterfield was a very welcome one. So I knew what to expect; and had no reason to be surprised when on opening the door my eye lighted on the figure of Cousin Arethusa, standing at the table in the middle of the floor, washing up cups and dishes. And yet the instant effect was a kind of revulsion. She is a person of that uncomfortable sort of complexion which does not give its possessor a *clean* look; not a bright brunette, but muggy and dark; and she must always have been so, I think, though Cousin Arethusa is at this time well past her youth. Hair of coarse coal black, hanging in thick dangling curls on each side of her face; oily black eyes, and a mouth which, if a mouth could, I should say had the same characteristic; of oiliness, I mean. There is a trait of *ingratiation*, visible in the lines of both lips and brow, very visible when she speaks. Why should there not? for poor Cousin Hildreth *is* poor, and she would like very much, I know, to retain her place

and her post here; and it depends, she knows, on my pleasure. If she only were a different person! but there is all over her a want of nicety. If she is clean, she is not tidy. The long black curls that afternoon were not in nice order, and bore further the abomination of a little bit of old black lace, which was not lace either, of course, but counterfeit, upon the parting of the hair. Round her person an old shawl was bundled, in a very uncomely way; and in this fashion, without an apron, she was standing washing dishes, at sundown.

What a rigmarole I have written! but it seems to me that all this, and more, came through my eyes to my heart and worked round to my brain, before I passed her and went on to grandmother. For as I kissed grandmother, I was thinking already what I should do with Arethusa. Grandma was delighted to see me, and kept my hand in hers, after I had sat down.

"Ain't you astonished to see the dishes not cleared away, Desire?" said Miss Hildreth presently.

"A little. I always get rid of dinner before I take hold of supper."

"Well, I *had* ought to; I confess it. But you see, the water warn't hot at dinner time; and then I thought, twarn't no use to make two bites of a cherry, and I'd let 'em stand and go along with the tea things."

"Why warn't the water hot at dinner time?" said grandma.

"Well, you see, I forgot to fill the kettle up. I declare I did! I guess it's because my water pail was empty and I was too lazy to fill it. Lazy folks takes the most pains, you'll tell me; and it's a fact. Well, I always did believe in takin' things easy."

"That isn't the way to it," growled grandma.

"Well, perhaps it ain't," said Arethusa, with her ingratiating smile. "'Tain't the way for Desire anyhow, for she ain't had her tea, and now the kettle ain't boilin'. We didn't expect you, Desire, that's a fact."

She bustled about and made up the fire and put the kettle on, fresh filled for me. I went up to my room to lay my wraps off, but I would not stop to think then. I kneeled down for one minute to pray for direction and for the spirit of Christ, and then I went down. Grandma was alone.

"Has she taken good care of you, dear?" I asked as I drew my chair close up to hers. Grandma half laughed, but I think it was really a half sob of pleasure to see me.

"She don't know how to take care of anything!" was her contemptuous answer; "herself least of all."

"Poor thing!" said I.

"Yes, but there's no need for folks to be poor things," said grandma; "and it's against the Lord's will that they should be. Why ain't you a 'poor thing' too?"

Arethusa came in and set supper on the table. Alas, how the contrast smote me! the bare little kitchen table, after Olive's polished oak; the coarse,

simply needful items of furniture, ware and hardware, after the delicate, exquisite order and beauty of detail which greeted my eyes and fed my mind morning, noon and night in her house. Arethusa's ungainly figure, instead of Harry's dapper neatness and silent, perfect attendance. I saw it and felt it, all through my talk to grandma and my answering Miss Hildreth.

"What'll you have, Desire? Shall I do you an egg?"

"No, thank you. A cup of tea."

"Well, the eggs ain't just what you call fresh. Our hens ain't layin', and other folks's lays when they have a mind to. Let me cook you a slice of ham!"

I thanked her and declined.

"I'm afraid there's nothing else in the house Aunt and I had pot-pie for dinner; and it was so good, I eat it all up. I always did think pot-pie was as good a dinner as could be set before sinners. And is that the shape of collars they wear in Philadelphia now?"

"For travelling."

"Do you mean that folks wear somethin' different when they're travellin', from what they do when they're at home?"

"Why yes, in a measure different."

"What's the use o' that? What's the fashion for home, then?"

"In collars? O I don't know;—lace, I think, and ruffles, and embroidery."

"Well, where *I* was brought up, folks used to put on their best things to go out—not to stay at home."

"It is just the other way in cities. Unless you are going to a party, of course."

"What do they put on then?" inquired Arethusa, her little black eyes kindling into such eagerness that I was vexed.

"Everything in the world they can think of,"—I answered.

"What did you wear, Desire?"

"I didn't go."

"Didn't go to parties? Don't Olive go?"

"Her husband does not like them." And as I spoke, it flashed across me, how odd it was that *I* had met Mr. Iredell at parties, several times, when I went first to Philadelphia. Arethusa burst out into exclamations and inquiries. Why did not her husband like parties?

"He thinks there is something better to be done with one's time. Does not that kettle boil, cousin?"

I made my cup of tea and drank it, in the midst of a storm of questions. Even grandma mingled in it a little with some of hers; and before the evening was over, the condition of life in large cities, Philadelphia in particular, and the details of existence in Olive's household, were as fully discussed as I could—or would—go into them. The evening was weary to me. I waited and longed for the end of it. At last grandma was tired, and

I attended her to bed. Arethusa lingered, but found me so uncompanionable that she too finally said good night and took her candle. I was left alone.

I made up the fire, and sat down to look in it at my life. I always like to make up my accounts, square and open, with my circumstances, whatever they be. Then I know where I am.

Before I came home, I knew what I should meet and how it would strike me. Now I was here, and the things were here that I expected; but what pressed upon me was, that I had done with the other and very different things that I had left and among which I had been living. To live among them never again! that was what I was saying to myself; and it was a very hard lesson to learn. I must learn it; I knew I must learn it; and I sat down to the task. This one thing must be thoroughly done.

Look at that old chocolate-coloured wooden mantelpiece, Desire. That is not much like the dear old tiles framing in the library fireplace, or the beautiful, very old-fashioned, but beautiful, brass grate in the dining room, which Harry kept in such immaculate condition of brilliance. And see what stands on the mantelpiece. A brass lamp, not in very good order; the tin coffee pot, it seems that is Arethusa's place for it; a box of matches, a mouse-trap, and grandma's knitting laid up at one end. Not much like what my eyes have been looking at in corresponding places for months past!

Not much like the little Etruscan vases, the beautiful bronze elephant in the library, which was a perpetual delight to my eyes, the little antique lamp, the bits of *biscuit* representing the heroes of German legend and fairy tale. Look at these wooden, straight-backed chairs, made over in Wormington, and painted chocolate colour with each a rude dash of crimson meant to represent an apple gracing the topmost slat. Are they even distant relations to the forms of ease and elegance which are called chairs in Mr. Iredell's house? Look at this yellow-painted floor, yellow painted, but worn in spots and streaks where feet most go, and with a breadth or two of rag carpeting laid down in front of the hearth. You have left Persian rugs and soft old tapestries, and you will never have anything more to do with them again. Your path of life lies in a ruder region, where these dainties must be dispensed with. All that part of your nature, to which they ministered, must be henceforth shut off and locked up. But here I rebelled. The love of beauty, the delight in refinèment, cannot be wrong, for in the works of God there is the utmost of both, in variety and perfection. I have but to go out of the house and turn my back upon its brown ugliness, and I have lines of beauty stretching before me on every hand; fields of loveliness in colour; and a purity lifted up above all that man can make common or unclean. Then, does want of refinement in these lesser matters, or in anything, grow out of a departure from God's standard in ourselves?

That's neither here nor there, Desire; you have got to take the world as it is and make the best you can of it; and if He, the Master, bore it and bore with it for thirty-three years, so well may you. The love of beauty and the delight of refinement you may cultivate still, all you can; the flowers will help you, and the hills; the snow, and the green leaves, and the Bible. But for the rest, life is not enjoyment, but—you know what it is.

I sat and looked at the mantelpiece and the brown chairs; looked long and thought. I wished for my St. Cecilia and my Black Brunswicker. In the depths of my heart I wished for more; for intercourse that was ended, for companionship that was vanished, as well as for those amenities and graces of daily life and surroundings which my very soul loves. But I have my work to do; and it seems those things would not help me, or else they would be given me. I have my work to do; to please my Master. Isn't that enough, Desire? and you can always go out and look at the hills, when the house gets too close for you.

I got to the feet of Christ at last, and "sat down under his shadow with great delight." Content, content! If I may only be where he is and do what he wants done. And if the work he wants me to do is *here*, then I would not be in Philadelphia for all the world. And if I can serve him better or please him more living alone, then I would not wish for the dearest companionship. I took up my candle at length and went to bed,

with a quiet peace in my heart which sent me to sleep directly; and I knew no more till the morning broke.

March 14.

I CAME down very early, that next day, for I wanted to examine into the conditions of things in the house and get them into working order. I found that *order* was a characteristic of nothing; and furthermore, everything, as nearly as possible, was not in its place but in the place where something else should be. I had a stirring two hours of it; but I had my pantry set to rights, my dairy regulated, the kitchen swept and dusted; the lamp and match-box and mouse-trap consigned to their places, and the table set, before Arethusa made her appearance. She was very much the same figure as yesterday evening; she came up and stood by the fire looking at me.

"You are a smart woman," said she. "I thought you would be tired after your journey, and I would have breakfast ready for you when you came down."

"At what o'clock?" said I.

"Well, you know the mornings are—"

"Don't say they are short," I interrupted. "We are in March, and half through the month."

"Yes, but still—It ain't late, is it? Is aunt up? Shall I help her? or shall I get the breakfast, if you would rather go to her?"

I accepted the latter offer, and went to grandmother. Grandmother did not say much, she is not an effusive person; but I was touched to see how evidently she was rejoiced to have me about her again. I could see it in the lines of her face, and hear it in every tone of her voice. Here is one piece of work for me; to give grandma just as good a time as I can for the rest of her life—or the rest of mine; and so I will. Suddenly, as I had almost finished the business of dressing her, she put a question.

"Desire, what are you going to do with that poor creature?"

"Arethusa?"

"Yes. What are you going to do with her?"

"Grandma, I am afraid she cannot have made you very comfortable."

"I got along," said grandma. "But I knew the house didn't."

"Everything was in disorder."

"Like her," said grandma. "I haven't known whether my clothes were on me or not, till now; since you went away before."

"I am not going away from you again," I said, kissing her.

"O yes, you will. Some day you'll be going for good—unless you take me along with you."

"No danger at all of that, grandma. I mean, of my going."

"You'll get married some time or other."

"No, grandma; there is no chance of it."

"Why ain't there a chance of it?" said she, turning rather sharply upon me. "Why not you as well as other folks?"

"I do not want to be married. I do not know anybody in the world that I could marry."

"That's nothing," said grandma. "The man will come."

"If he comes, I am persuaded that I shall send him away. I hope he will not come. I am going to take care of you, dear."

"Who's to take care of you?"

"Well I don't know, grandma, except that One who has promised never to forsake them that trust in him."

"That won't do," said grandma.

"Indeed it will do; and I am content, and happy, and glad, and rich, and everything else you can think of—that I ought to be. Now come; I think by the smell of the smoke Arethusa is frying the cakes; and she has certainly got the coffee made."

"But, Desire," said grandma without stirring, "you are as handsome as a picture."

"I am glad of it," I answered smiling.

"There is neither of your sisters that can hold a candle to you."

"I won't trouble either of them. What then, dear grandma? That is your opinion."

"Don't you think I've got eyes in my head?' said she sharply. "My opinion is as good as another opinion; and I don't like to hear you speak

so. Desire, did you never see any one you could fancy?"

"If I had ever fancied anybody that fancied me, I should not be here now, grandmother. Come! be content with things as they are. *I* am."

Grandmother followed me, only half content, I could see. But her other question instantly recurred to me; "what are you going to do with this poor creature?" Arethusa, in her bundling shawl, with the whole indescribable air of mental slackness expressed alike in the lines of her face and the lines of her drapery, stood between the table and the fire, frying the buckwheat cakes; of which grandma was very fond. I can hardly tell how unsympathetic, to use a mild term, her whole appearance was to me; how every trait displeased my eyes and every tone of her words offended my ears. Yes, what was I going to do with her? I took the slice from her hand and made her sit down; action was more welcome to me just now than inaction; but as I served the cakes, I was busily thinking. Arethusa had a miserable home to go to, I knew, if I sent her away; and hard fare; she has regularly fattened up, with this winter's good living. Though I thought I liked her better lean than fat.

"I do hope," said grandmother, "now you've got home, Desire, we shall have some good cakes. I have not seen a real right buckwheat all winter."

"Why, ain't these good?" said the maker of them.

"You'll know when you see another sort," returned grandma. "It seems you don't know that kind."

"Why what's the matter with these?" said Arethusa, holding up on her fork perilously a cake she had just buttered. "They are light, ain't they? I see holes in mine."

"Holes?" said grandma. "A buckwheat cake ought to be nothing but a sponge all through; and *then* they brown."

"I never saw 'em like that," said Arethusa meekly. "I should have said these were very good."

And she was eating them as if she thought so. Poor creature! What would she have to eat, if I sent her away? But if I let her stay, what would become of Desire? Poor creature, indeed! we are all poor creatures. I took a cup of coffee and broke some bread, swallowing thoughts faster than crumbs.

"Shall I bake some griddles for you?" said Arethusa.

"No, thank you. I do not care for them."

"You have seen enough of them all winter, I suppose?"

"I have not seen any. Olive never has them."

"Our men folks at home never would let the women rest if they didn't make buckwheats. From the time they begin in the fall, till the meal is gone in the spring, they were a regular thing. What sort of a man is Olive's husband?"

"He is the sort of man"—said I slowly,—"that does not care about buckwheat cakes; or any others."

"Ain't he healthy?" inquired my interlocutor.

I had nearly laughed, for my nerves were out of order, at the contrast between her idea and the reality; but I answered gravely that Mr. Iredell was a perfectly healthy man.

"Difficult, I s'pose. Don't you think rich folks are apt to be difficult? One would think they wouldn't be; but riches don't seem to bring content. It's the oddest thing," Arethusa went on, with a play of lip which hovered between the attempted smile and the involuntary quiver;—"it seems to me sometimes that if I had only enough to keep me, I should be so easy pleased! I wonder why some folks have so much and others so little?"

"David wondered at that, too," said grandma.

"David, who?" said Miss Hildreth curiously.

"I don't know," said grandma with a grim smile. "I never heard. David ben-Jesse, I guess they would have called him. But he is more commonly known as King David."

"O, David in the Bible!" said Arethusa. "I didn't know—Did he? Well, what's the reason of it, aunt?"

"Some folks are industrious," said grandma; "and some folks aren't. That's one reason."

"O but I know plenty of people that are industrious enough, and poor enough too; and other

folks, as the proverb says, are born with a silver spoon in their mouth."

"They are born with no such thing. But some folks are shiftless, and can't keep what they get; and other people turn every penny till it's two."

"I wish I could turn a penny so," said Arethusa. "But how can people keep what they get, aunt, when there are so many mouths for it to go into?"

"You haven't got anybody but yourself to take care of," said grandma.

"And I haven't got anything to do, either," she answered sadly; "nor any pennies at all. I only make one more mouth at home, where they've got more mouths already than they know how to feed."

"Don't be in a hurry," said I then. "Wait a bit, till the travelling gets better, before you think about going."

"I should be very glad to do so," she said, brightening up. "Thank you."

I saw that grandma looked brighter too; and she and Arethusa went off immediately into a spirited discussion about dyeing yarns, which subject, it seemed, had been up before. I did not hear it, for I threw myself into business; and had a morning of it; until gradually I had brought pantries and drawers and various departments of the household economy into something like working trim. We had dinner then; and after dinner I wrapped myself up and went out. I must be alone and think;

and there was no place in the house where I could be undisturbed.

It was a cold, gray day; more like winter than spring, though March was so far on its way. Snow covered the ground, and to judge by the looks of things, a fresh store and treasury of snow was getting ready somewhere to come and pour down upon us. Sky all of a leaden gray, except where in the southwest a light, round, hazy spot indicated that the sun was in that quarter, unable to look through the clouds; and a faint, beautiful blink of reflection appeared upon the smooth surface of the snow field beneath. No wind, or it would have been very severe weather. As it was, I was safe in my hood and fur cape.

I walked up the valley, in the direction away from the houses of the village. I walked fast till my blood was warm; then more leisurely, letting my eyes rove and my mind work.

Fair, and gray, and cold. The outlines of the hills rose white and black, white with a drapery of black boles of trees, upon the thick gray sky. Still, and cold, and very solitary, it seemed. Chesterfield valley was certainly very far away from the world; a white secluded wilderness. Now, Desire, this is your home; what are you going to do here for the rest of your life? and first of all, beginning with the question immediately in hand, "what are you going to do with this poor creature?" I do not want her! Grant that, as a fixed fact; does not she want you? Look at the two sides of it.

Her remaining here would bring a miss tone into the harmony of your home life; the sight of her and the sound of her would be a little daily annoyance. She does not understand the refinement which is so dear to you, and she will never understand it; if she stays, you have so much to count upon. That is what her staying would be to you; a little daily annoyance and disagreeableness, mounting up in the long aggregate to not a little. Nothing would be quite the same at home, with her in it. And having lost—so much else, may you not at least keep the delicacy of your home life intact? so far as it can be in the want of all outward appliances and surroundings to help it? Must this uncongenial stranger come in?—But then, Desire, are you going to live to yourself? What are you here for? Look at the other side, and see what her staying with you would be to this "poor creature." Paradise, comparatively. Out of care, and roughness, and confusion, and scanty subsistence, she would come into peace and plenty and quiet of mind; in fact, into all the enjoyment which life can afford her. And you are strong, Desire; a little annoyance will not hurt you; and if you want to do your Master's work, here is one way; and his own hand has put it before you, "That thou bring the poor that are cast out, to thine house."—Arethusa is not exactly "cast out," but it comes pretty near to that; she has no real home that she can call her own, where she has a right; and what is a home where one has no right?

I stood still by the fence a minute, while tears rose to my eyes to think I had been so hard and selfish. Looking over towards that faint bright spot in the clouds which told where the sun was, I thought, that was about as much as I saw of Christ. Just a faint notion of him. For if I lived in the warmth and brightness of his sunshine, there would be a little glow of it in myself. Here is one thing you can do in Chesterfield; secure the perfect comfort of two human lives, just by your love and care; and this is what Christ gives you to do. And I looked up, with my tearful eyes and said, "Lord, I will!"

So that was settled; and at rest so far, though ashamed, I walked on. I think, the afternoon seemed to grow warmer, and the footing easier. My footsteps fell more briskly, I am certain, and my blood moved faster. I got higher and higher up the valley, where the road mounts one of its environing hills; and when I had come to a good height, I turned about to look. Most beautiful it was! The valley lay stretched out in its length before me, the hills stood thick about it, one round head rising behind another, with Winter's white mantle over them all; and now, down in the west, there came a gap or rift in the clouds above the horizon, and light, golden and rich, broke forth. It touched one hill top after another with a bright glory; the world took a wonderful look in this view of it. Down below, it was gray and white and cold; up on the heights of the mountains there was the

sun's presence and blessing; and the glory up there carried besides the promise of a day to-morrow for the whole world. It all depends upon where you stand, Desire,—I said to myself. Get up high enough, and you may be in the sunshine all the time; and if the sun is on *you*, it don't matter if snow is on the ground, for a while yet.

I went down the hill now, feeling glad at heart, for I had got back to the presence of Christ again I ran, for the time was growing late; I ran down till I came upon level ground, and then still went forward briskly; so briskly that I took no notice of somebody coming out from a house I passed, till I heard myself called. I stopped, and was presently joined by one of the Sunday school teachers, Barbara Burgum.

"Why it's Desire Burgoyne!" she exclaimed. "I am so glad! I am going down street and wanted company, but I didn't know I could have so good. I called you on the chance. Why I didn't know you had got home. When did you?"

"Yesterday."

"You've been away an awful long while. Good for you I s'pose!"

"What have you all been doing while I have been away?"

"Why, nothing. We never do anything in Chesterfield, you know; unless you call it doing something, to get up and eat and go to bed and sleep again. That's about all."

"That is not much," I agreed. "But nobody need live quite such a bare life as that, Bab."

"Not if they can switch off the track and go to Philadelphia, or Boston. But if you stay in the Chesterfield track, I defy you to do anything. There's nothing to do."

"I expect to stay in the Chesterfield track now; but I hope not to find it so desolate as that."

"I wish you'd tell me where, if you find it anything else."

"I don't believe, Bab, anybody is put in this world to do nothing. There must be work for every one of us."

"It's all in the air then, for it isn't on the earth. To tell you the truth, Desire, that is one of the points in which it seems to me the world is considerably out of order."

"Perhaps that comes from the fact that people do not attend to their work when they have got it. Disorder would easily arise that way."

"*I* haven't got anything to do," said Barbara. "And I don't see what you have. Chesterfield is just like a snail, with his house on his head. It is all right; his house *is* on his head; but he don't get along, and having a house over your head ain't quite living."

"That wouldn't satisfy me."

"Gracious! it don't satisfy me; but what are you going to do? Have you been to see Mercy Quick?"

"No."

"I thought, as you had been up that way, you might. Did you hear about her? she is dying."

"Dying!" I exclaimed.

"Yes. In a galloping consumption. She was well, wasn't she, when you went away?"

"But she is Mrs. Quick's last one."

"Yes; five of them gone in the same way; isn't it dreadful? Desire, don't things puzzle you?"

"I believe they used, once," I said slowly. "I don't think they do now."

"Well, they puzzle me, and they frighten me too. The world seems so hard sometimes."

"But things *are* not hard,"—I said.

"How can you tell?"

"Because God is love, Barbara."

"Well, I know the Bible says so."

"Don't you believe the Bible?"

"Well—sometimes I think I don't."

"Is Mercy happy?"

"I don't see how she can be, lying alone there from morning to night; for her mother is too busy to attend to her much."

There is something for you to do, Desire! I said to myself. Aloud I asked,

"How is Mr. Macartney?"

"O he's just the same as ever. He can't get out of his tracks either. One of his sermons is just like another, and the lot of them this year are exactly like last year. I don't see any use in his going on preaching. We all know beforehand just what he will say."

"How does the Sunday school get on?"

"We come together as usual and go through the forms. There's no 'getting on' about anything, as I told you."

"What would you call 'getting on,' in the case of the Sunday school?"

"Why—being alive, and learning something, and perhaps feeling something. There might be more in the school, too; but I wasn't thinking of that."

"I should not call it getting on, unless the children were brought to Christ."

"How do you mean?"

"Made Christians of."

"I don't believe anybody thinks of such a thing."

"I'll tell you what, Barbara; it would be a good thing if we could have a Teachers' meeting."

"What for?"

"To study the lesson together. To study the Bible. I mean, a meeting every week."

"We never had one in Chesterfield."

"That's not a reason why we shouldn't."

"Yes, it is. People don't like anything they are not accustomed to."

"Well, Bab, suppose you and I come together and study the lesson? Come and drink tea with me next Saturday night, and we'll try. Do!"

"I should like it of all things. At what o'clock shall I come?"

"When you like. Say at four; then we can have a good time before tea."

With which agreement we parted; and I went

home, marvelling somewhat at the lines of activity opening before me already; but very thankful and very glad.

March 22.

I HAVE been to see Mercy Quick. She is going fast, but she is ready, and very patient. I find it is a great comfort both to her and her mother, to have me come and sit with them a while and read and talk. I must go just as often as I can; for they are much alone. Their house lies so high up the valley that it is out of the way of any but good walkers. It is a comfort to them too to have some nice little thing for Mercy to eat, that has not been prepared at home. I take something with me always.

It comes quite conveniently, apropos to these long walks of mine, to leave somebody at home to sit with grandmother. It is quite understood now that Arethusa is not to think, for the present at least, of going home; and she has blossomed out in consequence into a glow of happiness which it is touching to see. Grandmother has a kindness for her, and is very well satisfied to be left with her when I am out. So my way is all clear. Both of them however pricked up their ears when they saw me beginning to make cake Saturday morning.

"What's coming now, Desire?" grandma inquired. "Are you going to have company?"

I said yes.

"Saturday evening!" said Arethusa.

"Precisely," I answered smiling. "Saturday evening is the time to prepare for Sunday, isn't it? and we are just going to study the lesson, the Sunday school lesson, and get it ready for to-morrow."

"Who?" said grandma; and I told her.

"Seems to me, you don't want to make much cake, if Barbara Burgum is all your company."

"I am not going to make much," I answered.

"Where are you going to take her to study?"

"Into the parlour."

"Then you'll want a fire there."

"I am going to make a fire."

"Seems to me, Barbara might do her studying at home."

"It is good for the teachers to come together to study, grandmamma. Mr. Iredell thinks it is an essential of a thriving Sunday school."

"But you and Bab ain't all the teachers."

"We are two."

"If you think to get them all here," Arethusa now put in, "you'll have a job on your hands; at least, if you make cake for the whole of them."

"What's the cake to do with studying the Bible?" grandma asked.

"Sweeten it, perhaps," said Arethusa. "Or to reward them for it."

"I'd make mountains of cake," said I, "if it would get them to come. But it's only Barbara, grandmother."

"If it's only Barbara, I should think you would take her into your room and make a fire in the stove there. I shouldn't think you'd warm the parlour up for her."

But I knew my own thoughts; and though this time it was "only Barbara," I preferred to make certain arrangements. The parlour was nice and warm to receive us, when she came; and I had brought together what I had of helps for our study; not much, yet more than she had at command. A map or two; a good Bible dictionary; and Cruden's Concordance. The room looked cosy and cheerful; the table was covered with a thick green cloth; and I had an easy rocking chair on one side of it, in which I installed my guest.

"Well, this is what I call comfortable!" she exclaimed. "Is here where you do your study work?"

"To-day; not always."

"You'll have to tell me how to study. I haven't an idea. How to study the Bible, that is; I can get along with some other things; at least I used to, in my school times. But I don't see how you can *study* the Bible."

"Do you understand it all?"

"La, no! of course not. That's what I am here for."

"Then study is taking the means to understand it, and using them."

"I don't see how you can. Here's this chapter of Daniel, where the lesson is for to-morrow. I don't understand a word of it; all these 'goats' and

'rams' and 'horns.' It's just a jumble; and how can I be expected to make others see into what is as dark as a pocket to me?"

"Let us try if we cannot get some light on it. Do you know what a 'horn' is?"

"Something growing out of an animal's head, that he fights with."

"Well, you must not think of that here. You must think that it means a 'power.' In Bible symbolism a 'horn' stands for power and might; I suppose because, as you say, the horns are an animal's strength, for attack or defence. Then 'beasts' also are the figure for dominions—for ruling and governing might upon earth. The goat and the ram in this chapter stand for the two kingdoms, or empires, of Persia and Macedonia."

"Which is which?"

"The agile swift goat, which came from the west and 'touched not the ground,' is the Grecian empire; and Alexander is that 'notable horn between his eyes'; eyes being in Bible language the symbol for intelligence and insight, of which Alexander had plenty. The ram is Persia."

"How do you come to know so much?"

"I have heard it talked about a good deal, in Philadelphia."

"Then, if it means all that, why don't it *say* Greece and Persia and Alexander, and not a horn and a ram and a he-goat?"

"Remember, Daniel was shewn these things in vision. How could he see 'power' in the abstract?

or 'dominion'? Things must take form to be seen; and they would make more impression so, too."

"I don't know about that. Then here are four horns a little further on."

"Four kings or kingdoms, when Alexander's empire was broken up and divided between his four successors, don't you recollect? Lysimachus, Cassander, Seleucus and Ptolemy. Ptolemy in Egypt, and Seleucus in Syria."

"I seem to remember something about all that. But who is this 'little horn,' growing up out of one of the four? It is fearfully confusing!"

"Not at all; just translate; put the thing for the symbol. Out of the line of the Syrian kings arose that mischief-maker, Antiochus Epiphanes."

"I don't know him. I don't know anything about him."

So then I opened my Bible dictionary, and read to her what that gave us under several of these heads. And I brought an old Bible which contained the Apocrypha, and read the first chapter of the Maccabees. Barbara grew visibly more and more interested with every word. At last she declared that she believed she understood it, and now would never forget it.

"You see the use of these figures and symbols," said I. "What interests me specially is the point, that Antiochus is the Old Testament type of Antichrist."

"O if you go into *that*," cried Barbara, "I shall

declare off! I have heard of Antichrist all my life. Pa and Deacon Parsons are always at it, and sometimes Squire Binnacle too. I have heard of Antichrist all my life, and the scarlet woman."

"Did you understand it?"

"Not a bit! nor they either, though they thought they did."

"Now, Barbara, turn to the thirteenth of the Revelation—"

"O do you read in the Revelation? it is all confusion and riddles to me. I don't see how anybody *can* read it."

"Look at this one chapter to please me."

"I suppose I can stand that,—" said Barbara; and we read it. I asked if she had understood it?

"Not a particle."

"Translate again, from the symbols into the things symbolized. You see, in the times coming, there will arise a power or empire in the world, ruling all the world, that will set itself against the truth and the people of God and the kingdom of Christ. Just as Antiochus against Judah and the Jews. It will have power; it will tempt and persecute, and make things hard for the Christians; hard to bear, hard to stand. So hard, that many will not stand, but give way. And you see, that everybody will carry in his face the sign which party he belongs to."

Barbara studied the chapter again with a grave face. Then I made her go back to the twenty-fourth of Matthew, where these times are proph-

esied of; and to Second Thessalonians, where the hostile power is more in detail described. She became exceedingly engaged in the study, comparing one place with another, turning from Matthew to Revelation and back to Thessalonians again.

"And what will this terrible 'Wicked One' be?" she asked.

"Some developement of the world-power, of which the devil is at all times the secret instigator and strength."

"You believe in the devil?" said Barbara, looking up at me.

"I believe whatever the Bible says; and it says a great deal of him."

"I don't like to believe in such a being!" she exclaimed with a sort of shudder.

"It is dangerous not to believe in him."

"Why?"

"Then he has you at great advantage."

"What does this 'mark' mean, Desire? Will it be something that can be seen?"

"I think so. I am not sure but it can be seen now."

"Why, *that* beast don't exist yet."

"He will be only a new developement of the world-power, which has been fighting against God and his people all along. And I think even now the world sets its mark on those who belong to it."

"What sort of a mark?"

"Did you never see people whose faces said unmistakeably that they belonged to the world, and

had nothing to do with anything else, nor any connection with anything else?"

Barbara nodded silently, with her eyes fixed upon me. Then she said,

"That's the description of the most of the faces I know."

"And there is a very different mark, which the Lord sets upon his own. I sometimes think I can see that too."

"What is that?"

"Look at Rev. vii. 3, and iii. 12, and xiv. 1."

"*His name* in their foreheads!" cried Barbara. "How do you make that out?"

"I do not suppose it is his name in letters, any more than the other mark is in letters. See now, Barbara, the words in the eighth of Romans, 29th verse."

Barbara read them and repeated, "'To be conformed to the likeness'—does that mean, to *look* like him? I thought it meant character likeness, moral, or spiritual likeness."

"Could we have that without having the other?"

Barbara was evidently meditating.

"Now, for something *we* are to do in the matter, —read 2 Cor. iii. 18."

Barbara read it, and then confessed that she never in the least degree had understood those words. "How in the world do we 'behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord?' I don't see. I never did see, Desire."

"Christ reveals himself to those who seek him."

"'Reveals himself'?" Barbara repeated.

"We look into the Bible; and if the Spirit gives us the sight, we see the beauty and glory of Christ mirrored there; and revealed in our hearts; and looking at him we naturally grow like him."

"Not 'naturally' at all. It is *natural* to us to be just the opposite."

"But it is also a law of our nature, Barbara, that we grow like those we live with."

Barbara sat and stared at me. I asked her, what she was thinking of?

"You talk of *what we live with.*"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say."

"But really, Desire, nobody *lives with* such thoughts. We may have them now and then, but we are not always studying the Bible, nor thinking about it. Our lives are filled up with other things."

"And so, we do *not* see the glory of Christ, and do not grow like him. Very true."

"Well, we cannot."

"Why?"

"Did you ever see anybody that did?"

"Yes, and that shewed the beautiful growing likeness, too."

"Who?"

"Mercy Quick, for one."

"O but, she is dying. She has nothing else to do."

"Neither have we anything else to do. I mean, it is or it ought to be the one business of our lives, to know Christ; to learn of him, and to grow like him."

"But you cannot be always at the Bible."

"Please read the first half of the first psalm."

"Do you take that literally?"

"And read Deuteronomy vi. 6–9."

"But, Desire, it would be very poky if we were talking Bible all the time. Awful!"

"Not if we did it because the words were 'in our hearts.' People always talk of what they are full of."

"But it would be awfully stupid."

"No, indeed it would not. I know one person whose talk is always running into Bible things; and it is the loveliest, liveliest, richest talk you ever knew."

"Who is that?"

"My sister's husband."

"Olive's?"

"Yes."

"Olive isn't like that, or she didn't use to be."

I was silent.

"But, Desire, you have your work; your dairy, and your house, and so forth; you cannot do that and attend to these things at the same time."

"Yes, I can," said I with great inward joy, "for I can do them all for Christ; and so it is not two sorts of business, but all one, don't you see?"

Barbara sat and looked at me.

"Well," she said, as we at last rose up, "this is the very best afternoon's talk I ever had in all my life, and the pleasantest, and I am only sorry it is over."

"O it is not over yet," said I. "Come in to tea.'

And Barbara enjoyed her tea. Ah yes, I had prepared that on purpose too, and made some specially delicate tea cakes, besides the composition which had excited remark in the morning. Chesterfield people, while they know what is good, are a little inclined to trouble saving; seldom entertain their neighbours, or indulge their families with an uncommon treat in the matters of the table. And indeed the every day fare is quite good enough to content them. But I had a particular final cause for my sweet buns; and the buns did their work. Grandmother enjoyed them as much as anybody; and Barbara at going away repeated that it was the pleasantest afternoon she had ever spent in her life. I think I see my way clear before me.

June 15, 18—.

I HAVE been too busy to write. Things went as I had hoped. Barbara was glad to come the next week again to study the lesson; and grandma, I knew, made less objection because she learned that I was going to make wigs. That visit was as successful as the first. The next week I was

not surprised that two other of the teachers proposed themselves for admission to our party. I had given Barbara a hint that they would be welcome, and they came. After that the thing was upon runners. One after another asked if he or she might come; until now, (I don't know if anybody is aware of the fact,) we have a regular, full, Teachers' meeting. The enjoyment of the occasion is always great. Talk is lively; the study of the Bible is earnest and animated and fruitful; and the social pleasure of the supper afterwards I know is a bond to the whole. Grandma has come to take real delight in the party, I can see; and that makes my way very smooth. Finally, Mrs. Macartney has joined us; and I am very glad; for things have been for years in Chesterfield moving in ruts of long, long habit; and beyond the *habit* of religion, there was little else to be seen of it. Now in these Teachers' meetings there is life, and we are out of the rut.

For some time we met and parted without prayer. I knew that ought not to be; at the same time it was difficult to take the step necessary to put things in proper order. No one but me to take it, and I hesitated. But it must be taken, I knew; and one day I proposed it. There was a blank silence. By that time our company numbered five, I think; and not one of them made a move even to second me. At last Barbara spoke up for the rest.

"You must do it, if anybody is to do it, Desire.

There isn't one of us could 'speak in meeting,' if her life depended on it."

So I ventured. And the effort brings its reward with it. It is not an effort now. Indeed, if one has once given all one has to Christ, I do not think it matters so very much what he bids us do with it.

I have taken a class in the Sunday school myself; and now my time is pretty well filled up. The summer is glorious over all the hills; the roses are blossoming in the valley; but I can bear the smell of them and I can even enjoy it again. Since the sweetness of the Rose of Sharon is with me all the time.

Mercy Quick has gone home. I have occasion however to continue my visits there as much as ever. The mother has nothing left but one rather stupid son; and she needs all the help and sympathy that can be shewn to her. So I go often, and sit with her and read the Bible. It is a long walk, but I let nothing interfere with my going, and Mrs. Quick looks out for me with security on certain days. Here grandma grumbles and scolds a little. She is certain I take these long walks too often; she is afraid I am doing too much generally; I shall wear myself out. But I am blooming and strong and hearty; nothing is doing me any harm, but only good. I think, to minister is the sweetest thing in the world; and when one feels that one is doing it *for Christ* too, one's cup grows full. I have given up all regrets and ceased even to wish to have the management of my own life; I

have given all up to the Lord; and there is a strange blessedness about it, even when I think of the things that have pained me. I am Christ's, and that is enough.

July 1, 18—.

IT is five years since I added a page to this record. Five years, since that 15th of June when the roses were blossoming round me and I could taste their sweetness again. Yes, I have enjoyed them every summer since then.

I have not written, partly because I had plenty beside to do; partly, and that was the most, I thought that writing rather helped me to think of things that had better be forgotten. So I busied myself with work, whatever came to hand, and sat down to think only when I had my Bible open before me.

I can hardly tell all that has made me so busy. To my sisters, I judge by their letters, I seem like a mole in his hole; doing work maybe, but underground, and not having good use of all my five senses. They are mistaken though; I have not been in the dark. "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings." In that sweet, warm light I have been living and working. It is not *I* who am the mole, if there is one among the three of us. Let me see. Sunday school, and study for it; there go

ever so many hours a week. Teachers' meeting and getting ready for it; there go *some*. The meeting is always here, for I have nothing to hinder me, the people say; and we always have a good supper, for I know the sure knowledge of that fact oils the machinery of the entire afternoon. A thorough success this meeting has been, in various ways. The study of the Bible has been waked up; the instruction given to the classes has been of a new character; and the social feeling of the church and of the whole village has greatly improved. Grandmamma has enjoyed the meeting, and so have I, and it has been a small Paradise to Cousin Arethusa. I do not a bit grudge the hours I have spent in making cake for it. Out of this weekly gathering, I think, a new spirit of missionary enterprise has sprung up in Chesterfield; and *that* has made demands upon time, too.

Then of course I have had a great deal of visiting on my hands, what with my class, and what with neighbours who needed something or other. And at home I have studied Hebrew and German. I got Mr. Macartney's help in the former; and O, how I enjoy it! I mean, Hebrew. Grandma wondered at me a little; but dear grandma was disposed to think right all I did. I speak in the past tense; for she is gone from me. Gone, not to make a visit to relation or friend; gone home; where those who go neither return nor wish to return again. She has been very sweet these latter years. I remember when she was rather sharp-spoken and

easy to irritate; but all sourness and sharp edge to her talk or feeling has long vanished away. She has been very sweet to me all these years. Now she is gone, I do feel alone, and shiver a little. There is nobody for me now; no one in the world. For I cannot go to Philadelphia. I have never been there again since that winter five years ago. It is best not. I know I must not; and indeed I cannot bear it. Olive and Caroline have made attempts over and over again, to get me to visit them. I have steadily and always refused. I am grown a stranger to my own; for they do not like to come here. I suppose they will write now and beg me very hard to live with them. What shall I do?

There are roses in plenty in bloom, and a wealth of summer beauty all over mountain and valley. The foliage is lush and bright on the hills, the corn is growing high in the fields, flowers fill the garden, berries are red and ripe on the bushes; it is wealth everywhere; and I feel so stripped and poor. I am so alone. And I am so young yet; hardly twenty-five. The world looks chill and strange to me, in the midst of all its richness. I know,—what should I do if I did not know,—that my Sun of righteousness is shining yet; and I shall get into the warmth again by and by.

July 9.

I HAVE been having visits. For some days after grandma's departure I was left to myself, and Arethusa. Then one afternoon came Deacon Parsons to see me.

Deacon Parsons had a straw in his mouth, as usual. I do not know if he can talk to his satisfaction without it. He had one in his mouth, and he sat and turned it about between his lips; to match, I have no doubt, the turning and twisting of thoughts within him. We were on the little porch before the front door; he had found me there, and the afternoon was so warm I did not ask him to go within walls. He sat on one side the porch, and I on the other.

"Well, Desire!" he began at last. "This world's a changeable sort o' dwellin' place!"

"Chesterfield stands pretty still,"—I answered.

"But not the folks in it."

"No," said I. "You would not wish it, would you?"—For there are moods in which one does not want to admit any sort of soft suggestion. He took time to consider his answer.

"Well, I don' know," said he. "Sometimes, when harvests are bad, I think I'd like a change; and then agin, years when all goes right, I don't keer so much about it."

"But things cannot go any way *but* right, for the Lord's people," I said.

"Looks drefful onlike it, sometimes," he remarked, his eyes going off to the distant hills.

"That is only looks," said I. "They can't go wrong."

"You kin keep hold o' that confidence, kin you, allays?"

"I know it, always."

"Knowledge ain't feelin'."

"Well, I feel it, Deacon Parsons. I am content and sure about it. The dear Lord, he makes no mistakes."

And yet, as I said it, I don't know how, the tears sprung to my eyes; and I was obliged to put my head down and cry in good earnest.

'Ay, ay!" said the good deacon softly. "I knowed it, you'd feel kind o' drear, now she's gone. And that's what I come to see you about, Desire. What be you thinkin' to do?"

"Nothing—" said I, drying my eyes.

"You hain't had time to bestow no thoughts on your arrangements yet?"

"I have no arrangements to make," I said. I dare say I said it sadly.

"Well, that's jes' what I come to speak about. My wife and I, we've been talkin' it over. She sets a lot by you, Desire."

"Does she? I am glad she does," I said.

"We've been a talkin'. You see, there warn't nothin' to hender our talkin'; and we've spent all the time, a'most, since—ah, well, all these last days, talkin' about it, and about you. My wife can't git

her mind easy about you, nor I can't nother; and we've been spekilatin'. You see, Desire, we don't want to lose you, and Chesterfield don't; and the question is, how to keep you? I don't know how it is you hain't got married before now; but anyhow, here you are, and I'm glad on't. Now you've had a home all these years, and money enough to keep you; and the money you'll have to be sure, the same as ever, and more of it, for there'll be fewer to keep; but what be you goin' to do for a *home?* And my wife and I were thinkin'—could you put up with our ways, and come and make your home along with us? She'd be glad;—and so would I be."

He made pauses here and there, pauses of consideration either for himself or for me; but now he stopped, and took the straw out of his mouth, and turned to me. I was greatly touched. This was not much after the fashion of Chesterfield, which in general likes to attend to its own affairs and grants other people liberty to do the same. I began with some expressions of warm gratitude and acknowledgement. He forgot to put the straw in his mouth again.

"That's all very well," said he; "but *will you come?*"

"Dear Mr. Parsons," I said, "I do not know what I shall do. I do not see now anything but to live on here, as I have been doing."

"Too lonesome—" said he.

"I do not know. I shall find out, I suppose, whether I can bear it."

"They'll try to git you in Philadelphy."

"I shall not go there. I shall stay in Chesterfield."

"Think so, sure?"

"I am quite sure. I shall not go to Philadelphia."

"Mebbe you'll change your mind when the letters come."

"They have come," I answered.

"And you wrote back you wouldn't?"

"I wrote back I could not."

"I'm main glad o' that!" said the good old man striking his knee. "I'm as glad as if I'd found somethin'. And I hev'. Well, we'll talk furder about that other plan. Chesterfield couldn't git along without you, no sort o' how!"

With which he went.

I thought it all over the next morning as I was taking my solitary breakfast. *That* was nothing new; I had been accustomed to it for some time. For Arethusa loves to lie late in the morning; and by degrees it grew to be a rule, that she came down to breakfast after grandma and I had had ours. So she did after grandma began to take her breakfast in bed; I eat mine alone. Finding that this was the rule, of course I had no one but myself to please in my breakfast hour, and I liked to have it very early. This morning it was very early. We are not long past the longest days, so the sun was up, but only just up. I had good kindling, and my kettle boiled soon; and when my tea was ready I set a small table in the porch and

carried my breakfast there. For the house was too close for me; I could not bear it; and the morning was extremely warm. Not a breath was stirring; but out in the open air the night had left a little freshness behind her, which the day would soon burn up. As yet, how lovely it was! The sun was casting a coppery glow upon the hill tops and sides, where he could look at them; down in the lower grounds the dewy sweetness of grass and corn and flowers, and trees and mosses, was—not "floating" or "wafted," for there was as I said, no stir; only it was there, and filled the valley. I sat in the porch, and drank in a great deal along with my tea, and fed on much beside bread and butter. The sky was blue and cloudless; the outline of the hills less sharply drawn upon it than sometimes, because of that misty incense the trail of summer's night garments had left behind it. All the valley was still yet; in one or two spots I could see a column of thin smoke going up from somebody's chimney; going straight up into the air; a thin, curling, straight ascending pillar of smoke. Is anything prettier? and the thought came to me of the comparison in the Song of Solomon, which always seemed to me so lovely, ever since I comprehended it.

"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?"

For grace, and stateliness, and royalty, could

there be a fairer image? Ah how glad I am know that Royal One. And next to knowing him myself, what is better than to tell of him to others? How can I do that best? So I came round to Deacon Parsons' proposition, which I had meant to consider; and then again the beauty of the time led me off. A new breath of honeysuckles and roses came to me. How rich the summer is! how full of delights; and they are yet only an image and testimony of the other and larger riches God has in his hand for them that love him. And even with that, the tears came into my eyes with the thought that I was *alone;* they dropped into my lap; all the sunlight could not dry them; and at last I pushed my bread and butter away, and leaning my head against the edge of the table had a good fit of crying, more thorough and hearty than I had known before since grandma left me. I felt so utterly alone. The world would be so lovely if I had somebody to love—and to love me! And that line of hilly horizon seemed to say the world was wide—and empty The emptiness pressed on me. Then, after a little, the thought stole in, that I *had* some one to love, and to love me; even Christ my Lord. Not far away, leaving that line of hilly horizon so eloquent of emptiness, but nigh and here; with me; knowing and caring about all that concerned me; not thoughtless of my loneliness, nor meaning me to lead a loveless life, but offering and giving Himself to supply all my wants and fill all my desires. Yes, I knew it, and tears flowed softer, and through

the shower and on the cloud came the bow of promise, brightening till its colours were reflected from all nature. Yes;—"Jesus only," will do for a lonely heart; if so be it only has him, and not a mere idea of him. My tears ceased, dried by his own hand, I think; and with a quiet heart I turned now to consider the question, what he would have me to do? The morning was incomparably sweet, and seemed to smile encouragement at me. I do think, when anybody's heart is right with God and in peace, nature does bring messages from him, which no other ear, perhaps, can hear. Everything brought them to me this morning. There was nothing to interrupt my thoughts or confuse nature's messages, it was so early yet; all lay still under its Creator's hand, "full of his riches." Light and shadow changing upon the hills, as slowly light was banishing shadow; corn fields ripening; hay fields yielding their crop to the scythe; the fragrance of the hay mingling with the perfume of honeysuckles and roses, mignonette and heliotrope and lavender, and wild things from the hills. "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy riches." So was one poor human heart; and I sat there, and looked, and thought, how best I could do my Lord's work in the world.

I considered Mr. Parsons' offer. Certainly I should be less alone in their house than in my own. In one way. But, perhaps I should not be enough alone. Could I do my work there as unhindered as here? What would become of Are-

thusa? they would not take *her* in. What would become of the Teachers' meeting? Mrs. Parsons would not think, probably, that she could bear the trouble of having it at her house; indeed I knew she would not. How would it be with other ministries? when I wanted to carry supplies to somebody in want, or to cook food for somebody sick, would I not be hindered by finding myself in another person's kitchen and having none but another person's storeroom to go to? I *had* felt as if the solitude in my emptied house would be unendurable; now I began to take a different view. Finally an idea started up in my head which settled the question. I broached it to Arethusa as soon as she was fairly seated at her breakfast.

"What do you think of my inviting Mrs. Quick to come and make her home with us?"

Arethusa dropped knife and fork, ejaculating, "Mrs. Quick!"

"She is utterly alone now, you know. Her son has gone to Concord to get work."

"You know best," said Arethusa; "of course; I have no right to speak. And I do not know Mrs. Quick, except by hearsay. But, from what I hear, I judge she could not pay you much. She is very poor, ain't she?"

"Yes. That is one reason in favour of my proposal."

"Can you afford to take her in for nothing, as you do me?"

"We should be no more in the family than we

have been—and we have always had enough to be comfortable."

"Are you sure that it would be pleasant?" said Arethusa, with another look at me.

"No. That is not the question."

"It seems to me, that is the question."

"No, cousin. The first thing in life is not to please oneself."

"You are very good," said Arethusa, in a tone of voice which was not flattering however; "but I confess I think a good deal, in such a matter, of how it would work along every day."

"So do I," was my answer. I did not tell Arethusa what images started up before my mind's eye; of the rest and peace such a plan would bring to the poor woman we were thinking of.

It was very well I had had my morning's meditation and made up my mind. For in the course of the afternoon I had another call. I was surprised to see Mr. Chandler's handsome head coming up the walk. He had never made a visit here before. I made him welcome, and wondered meanwhile as to what his errand could be. I saw he had one. But the revelation of it seemed to be difficult to the good man. He sat and stared about him.

"You've got a smart house here," said he. We were in the parlour, where it was coolest. "A real smart house! I didn't know you had fixed it up so elegant."

"That was done long ago," said I. "The elegance is rather faded."

Looks to me first-rate. Books, hey? I s'pose you're a great reader. What's here? '*The Cathedral.*'—Why you ain't a bit of an Episcopal in your tastes, be you? I never thought it of you."

"No, Mr. Chandler. That is a beautiful book of poetry, about a cathedral,—and other things."

"I've read of cathedrals," said Chandler, turning his fine, open, intelligent face towards me; "but I never could get a good idea of 'em. Have you seen any of 'em, perhaps, in Philadelphy?"

"No. Nothing like what you have read of, Mr. Chandler. Those are mostly belonging to the old world. I can shew you something, though. This is a bit of Westminster Abbey—the interior."

I put a good photograph in the stereoscope as I spoke and handed it to him, making him stand so as to get a good light. This was a gift which had come to me lately from Olive, with a box of good photographs, to help me, as she wrote, with my Teachers' meeting. Whose idea that was I needed nobody to tell me. Olive would never have thought of such a thing. I had hitherto kept my treasure to myself, not having received it long before grandma became too ill for me to attend the meetings. Now I was struck and amused to see the effect on our Chesterfield blacksmith. He looked almost awestruck. I had expected an outburst of exclamation; but instead of that he was absolutely still.

"Is *that* what they call a cathedral?" he said at last, in a tone which whether it were admiration or disappointment I could not tell.

"Only a little piece of one," I answered. "That is a bit of the interior; what is called the 'Poets' Corner,' because so many of the poets have monuments there. That is one way the English honour famous people; they give them monuments in Westminster Abbey."

"I see! But ain't it a church? This don't look much like it."

"Part of it is a church. Here is another view which will shew you the pulpit."

"That 'ere little basket of a thing? Why, it ain't at the end, Desire?"

"No, in cathedrals they never have the pulpit at one end; the space is too large; it is put more central."

"It does look mighty big!" he assented, with his eye immoveably held to the glass.

"Let me shew you this outside view of another cathedral, and you may judge of its size. But indeed Westminster is not a cathedral, though it would shew you what the building of a cathedral is like. This is the Dom at Cologne."

"I should say, there warn't no sort o' use in havin' a church as big as that—ef it's as big as it looks. Why, a man'd want a trumpet, to make himself heard from one end to the other."

I endeavoured to explain the aim and arrangements of a cathedral of the Middle Ages.

"You do know a sight o' things!" said Chandler, still staring at Cologne. "And I didn't come to talk about the Middle Ages, nother. I'll be shot ef I

know how to tell you what I *did* come to talk about! I reckon it's as good a way as any, to dash right into it." And therewith he let fall his stereoscope and Cologne cathedral. "Desire,—suppos'n' you come and live along of us? then we could talk up the cathedrals, and everything else in creation. Hey? Ain't that a first-rate plan, now?"

I was so astonished, I could not speak, but gazed at him as he had stared at Cologne. He went on presently.

"We've been talkin' of it, my wife and I, off and on, for days and days. You see, you couldn't make your home here now, alone; that wouldn't be good for you. And we've arranged to fix up the south-east spare room for you—two rooms, for that matter, ef you want 'em; and you kin put in 'em what you like of your own, to make yourself feel comfortable, and you shall do jest what you like, and when you like, and *as* you like; and nobody ask when you go out or come in. We kin find a tenant for the old house here, easy; and that'll bring you in so much more; and for the pleasure o' havin you we ask only the pay o' *havin'* you—and think it's a good bargain, as fur as we're concerned. Come, Desire! say it's a bargain! My wife'll be real delighted, and so will I be."

It was not too easy to say no, and to make Mr. Chandler understand that "no" it must be. He went away very much disappointed, and left me a little sore. But I had not got through yet.

I had hardly put up my photographs and my

stereoscope, when another figure was seen coming up from the gate. Farmer Binnacle. He rarely went so far from home to make a visit, and I was grateful to him. His kind face looked grave. He came in and sat down and looked around him; something as Chandler had done.

"Desire, how do you do?"

I said, very well.

"Yes, and you mean it," said he, his eye coming back from the wall to my face. "Some women have the pluck o' ten men!"

"It is not pluck in me, Mr. Binnacle."

"You've got it, though. What is it, then?"

"That makes me feel 'very well'? Nothing but Christ;—the knowing and the loving him, and what he gives me."

"Your religion ain't the common sort," said he, still looking at me consideringly.

"It's a good sort—" said I smiling at him.

"I believe my old mother was one o' your kind. I remember her. Prayer was better'n supper to her, any day, and between the Bible and her dinner there warn't no sort o' comparison. But how come *you* to be such an old-fashioned sort of a saint, Desire? that's what I'd like to know."

"Why is not every one such? that's the better form of the question."

"I don' know about that. Likely, it's because they don't foller your ways. What be they, Desire? how come you to be different from the rest of us?"

"Am I different?"

"'Seems to me, you're one o' them fragrant plants in the Lord's garden, that the Bible talks about; and the most of us are as dry as sticks. What's made you different, child? you ain't a child now, but you was once, and you've always been the same; unlike other folks."

"I suppose the Lord must have taught me."

"Ay, and why don't he teach other folks? Well, well! he gives no account of his matters."

"Of some of them, no; but of *this* he has, Mr. Binnacle. He has declared that he 'will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth;' and he has bade us 'go into all the world and make disciples of every creature.'"

"Well, they ain't all made disciples of."

"Because they won't."

"Well, they ain't all heerd the invitation."

"Because the church has not carried it, as she was told to do."

"Well, anyhow, Desire, it ain't every disciple that knows so much o' the Lord's goodness as you do."

"Because they do not want it, Mr. Binnacle."

"Eh? How? What is that? A Christian, and not *want* it?"

"Yes. If they wanted it, they would seek for it; and the Lord said, 'Seek, and ye shall find.' But they must seek it as 'hid treasure'—and you know how that is; and they must want it so much that they cannot do without; and *then* they will get it."

"I'll make a note o' that," said the farmer. "It'll do first-rate for next prayermeetin.' I won't tell 'em where I got it, though. How come you to be so much wiser than other folks, Desire? that's what I'd like to be told."

"It's all in the Bible, Mr. Binnacle."

"Fact; and with that an awful reproach to the rest of us," said the farmer. "Desire, I believe I'd be a better man, if you lived in our house."

"I don't think you would," said I smiling again.

"And my wife, she thinks she'd be a better woman. Now you like to do folks good; suppose you come to our house. You'll do two people good all the time; and then you can always see what more there is can be done out o' doors."

To my astonishment, I saw that he too was in earnest. He too! Three friends were willing, and eager, to receive me into their homes and families, for the remainder of my natural life. Mr. Binnacle pressed it. He said I should be just as a daughter in the household. Finding my refusal was not to be overcome, he also gave utterance to the fear that I might be tempted to leave Chesterfield and go to my sisters. I told him there was no danger.

"They will want you," said he. "They will try. And they will do it."

"They have tried, and they may try again; but they will not do it. I shall stay here, in my old home, the rest of my life I expect."

"Ah, you'll get married one of these days," said the farmer rising; "but that needn't necessarily take

you away. Well, that ain't to-day nor to-morrow. any way; and I'll go home."

And as I watched him, passing through the little courtyard garden and down the road, I thought to myself, Desire, your question is settled. Here is your place. Where *three* families are ready to adopt you, there is a stock of love and a field of influence which it would not be wise to barter for another. You could hardly hope for more. Live here and work. And there will come a harvest time also for you, when the Master of the vineyard appears to take account of his servants.

Jan. 5, 18—.

FIVE years, almost—four and a half—since my last page was written. I did not mean to let them go by without any record. However, the time has been unmarked by anything, more than the little daily changes, the ups and downs of all life and of village life in particular. The relative positions of people and things have remained absolutely the same. Arethusa and I have lived on together, rather helped than hindered by Mrs. Quick. She, poor woman, was very glad to accept my invitation; it saved her from distressing loneliness; and a more inoffensive member of a family could not be. Arethusa complains that her persistent melancholy gives *her* the blues; it has no such effect, happily, upon my nerves. Nothing does. I never have the

blues. The days are *gray* sometimes. I cannot help that. There is a certain want of colour in them; and happy as I am, and busy, I cannot help knowing that, as a woman, a large part of my mental nature is like an unused room in a house; locked up and empty. I do not think such locked doors are ever pleasant to pass; still less is it pleasant to turn the key and go in, and see the coldness and silence of the place; and of no sort of use to speculate how it would be if furnished and lighted and warmed. I suppose really my not writing, all these years, has been due mainly to my consciousness of such a closed door, which with my pen in my hand I was terribly tempted to open, and take a peep in. Not good; not best; and so I eschewed writing about myself; for even if I did not peep in, there would come an echo from the emptiness there. And I have been so busy and so happy, that truly I had no need to spend my time in opening closed doors. The open doors gave me access to room and life enough.

There have been no changes anywhere else either, to chronicle. In the village everything has gone on its way, though it seems to me with a gain in some quarters. More life, and more love astir, I think, in the common relations of people, and the church, and the Sunday school. With my sisters things have not changed; except that Caroline's family grows larger. Olive has no children. I have never been tempted to make another visit to either of them, though both of them have tried

hard to get me. But it was not best. I knew it was not best. I could not bear it.

Now however the time has come that I must go there again. Olive has written an almost despairing cry for me, and Mr. Iredell has written too. She is not well; *that* she has said for years; but now she says she is dying, and that I must come to her. Mr. Iredell adds his most earnest request that I will, and admits that Olive's condition is critical. So I have made my few arrangements, and set off this evening.

"I am glad you are going," said Mrs. Quick. "We shall miss you dreadfully; but you want a little play, dear. You never do have any."

"Don't I? My life is all play," I answered; "but it will not be play just now. My sister is very ill. That is why I am going."

"She will get well when you come," said Arethusa; "and then they won't let you go again. I know how it will be. I am afraid I shall never be able to manage that cream."

"You must manage it, because Mrs. Quick is not strong enough to churn," I said. "Keep the cream where it will be tolerably warm, and stir it every now and then, and you will have no trouble."

"You were churning two hours, the last time," said Arethusa. "My patience would never hold out."

"It must," said I, "or you will have to go without butter on your cakes. Remember that. And Mrs. Quick, you are not to help her. You are not

fit for it. I have given you the bread and Arethusa the butter to manage; and I wish you good success, both."

I was not sorry—what a mixture of inconsistencies we are! and yet they must be consistent, I suppose—In the midst of various anxieties that possessed me, and with a hundred weightier thoughts in my mind, I was conscious as the train moved off with me, that I was not sorry to leave Chesterfield and its bread and its butter, yes, and Mrs. Quick and Arethusa, for a time out of sight. I believe the nature of us, human creatures, demands change; and it seemed to me as if every nerve in my body welcomed it. The car was a pleasant place; the motion was pleasant; the various human beings by whom I was surrounded were a study of the most novel and interesting kind. Really they were of the same race as the Chesterfieldians, to whom I was so accustomed; nevertheless, these were varieties to which I was not accustomed. One or two school boys, going back to school after the holidays, I supposed, interested me mightily. One of them had an honest fresh face; the other, older, looked neither honest nor fresh; rather as if the world's ways were already old in that young head of his, and the head itself grown prematurely old in consequence; and I could see how he *imposed* upon his younger companion; was imposing to him, I mean. The young frank eyes were constantly lifted in admiring merriment to this boy's; which looked evil and supe-

rior down, while his mouth was busy pouring out teaching which I could guess was alluring and knew very surely was not good. My heart ached. Could I do anything? I feared not; for I had no chance to speak and had no book in my pocket. One ought always to have a book in one's pocket; I mean, hand-bag. From these boys, when I could turn my eyes away, I gladly looked to a pair of country women on a seat opposite; yet the view was not altogether satisfactory there either. One was young and the other was old; mother and daughter evidently; and the mother was one of those simple, gentle, honest folk, unlearned in the world; wise enough in her own sphere maybe, but very innocent there. So she was innocently amused, curious, wondering, ready to be enquiring. While the daughter pranked in what she supposed to be fashionable attire, and held herself superior in what she supposed to be elegant demeanour. I think she was a little bit scandalised at her old mother, and tried to make her hold her peace. Sometimes, in the pauses at stopping places, the old lady turned round and put questions or addressed remarks to me; and once she had nearly driven me beyond the bounds of all propriety. She remarked innocently that she "was glad to see so many females in the car; they had told her this was a *male* train."

"She thinks folks had ought to sit separate, as if they was in meetin'," the daughter added. "But I survived them both, with difficulty; and was sorry

when they left the train, or the train left them, by the way. Then my eyes studied the various forms of men of business, men and boys, in the car; I speculated as to their ways of life, surroundings, and character. That was not an enlivening speculation. I came back ever and again to the thought, —what are the Lord's people doing on the earth, that one sees so little trace of their working? and to the wish that the day of the Lord's own appearance would speedily come. "Lord Jesus, come quickly." Who prays that prayer? I rarely hear it. But this night my heart joined the cry many times, which truly is not new to it.

I travelled all night. For a long time I was not sleepy, excited by many things besides novelty, which I did *not* want to look at. Partly for that cause, perhaps, I was so willingly busy with every trifle which crossed the retina of my vision. I yielded at last to advancing night and increasing drowsiness; made a pillow of my shawl bundle and slept; and knew little more until I awaked in the gray of the morning to find myself in New York.

It was too early for any restaurant to be open, and I did not know where to go, if it had been later. For this I was provided; and took my breakfast in the great waiting room of the Grand Central. This was a strange experience too. I had not travelled at all for so many years, that I was like some one coming back to the world after a long absence. My eyes looked eagerly at every new thing. Truly, the great world is a very different place from Ches-

terfield, and the ways of life upon this earth are divers. Anybody would say, the waiting room of a railway station in the gray of the early morning is a dull place; it was not at all dull to me. I was hungry, and enjoyed my sandwiches and cold coffee; and while I was taking my breakfast I noted detail after detail, which every one had interest and suggestion for me. There was the policeman on duty; what a life! Here desolately keeping watch over his fellow creatures, to see that one did no harm to another. His mental faculties brought to a focus upon wickedness and nothing else! There came in a newsboy with papers under his arm; they must have been evening papers, I think, for it was too early for the morning issue. He came a few steps into the room, and seeing nothing of prospect for him, went away again. It was a little boy. Ah, little fellow, what sort of a home have you got? Have you a mother there waiting for you? and what sort of a mother? or perhaps have you none, and nobody, and nothing else in the wide, wide world? I would have liked to ask him; but I had no opportunity, and perhaps my courage would have failed.

At last the day came on, shining in at the windows, and I could set out for the Desbrosses Street ferry. It was most beautiful, crossing the river. For so long I had not seen more water than flows in a mountain brook; the broad, mighty tide, coming down from miles above with its great flood, was majestic and imposing to me, and withal most

lovely; for the rising sun was colouring the clouds with deep purplish red, growing brighter each moment, and the reflection of those tints on every individual wave and wavelet was delicate and varied and rich in the extreme. I watched it, for every moment brought a change, until gold took the place of crimson;—and then we were at Jersey City and I must seek my place in the cars. But I noticed that my mental nature, having been kept on one sort of fare for so very long, had a kind of hunger and thirst for new food. All sorts of even small things were a pleasure to me.

I suppose I was willing to stave off thought of another kind. I know I watched the low roofs and small domiciles of Jersey City, as we passed through, with an attention wholly disproportioned to their claims; and when we were clear of the place, and the wide level fields of New Jersey were around me, and we went flying along over them, it suddenly came home upon my heart, as something I could put off no longer, that I was going to Philadelphia and would very soon be there. And the questions trooped after. So many years had gone by since I left it last,—so many,—was I changed? Were *they* changed? I had seen Caroline once, with two of her children; not Olive nor Mr. Iredell. And now I was a woman of almost thirty; not the girl Desire any more. Would the woman of thirty have forgotten the feelings and follies of ten years before? would the beautiful old house in that quiet old street be to me what it was

once, a place of bewitchment? I hardly thought it. Ten years ought to have sobered me; *had* sobered me; but what then? and what has being sobered to do with it? And what meant this growing weight at my heart, pressing heavier and heavier? Then Olive; she was always complaining and fancying evil about herself; was this a different case from the ordinary? The call had been different from the ordinary; so different, that while I had uniformly negatived those, I had yielded obedience immediately to this. What if Olive were really very ill?

I could not look at that supposition. I put it away, and tried now not to think at all. Which makes this difference; that instead of looking at one thing at once, the whole troop of things come and look at you together. I believe I was half glad of a detention which occurred about a dozen miles from Philadelphia. We had a break-down; not dangerous, only delaying; and so it happened that it was a long while past the usual time when we rolled into the station.

The first person I saw was Mr. Iredell, who grasped my hand and in the same breath gathered up my belongings; and in two minutes more I was seated in the carriage and he beside me, and the rumble of the car wheels was exchanged for the soft rattling over paving stones. Mr. Iredell enquired after the cause of the delay; and told me Olive was no worse. *He* was not changed a hair, I saw. I thought he looked at me once or twice to

see if I was. Or to see how much I was; how could I tell? Little else was said between us till we reached the house; only we agreed how cold it was. It was a very cold day. The absence of snow in the streets made it none the less wintry; indeed I think in cold weather snow is comforting. When Mr. Iredell had handed me into the hall, I was about to withdraw my arm from his and run up stairs, but he held me fast.

"Where are you going?"

"To Olive, of course, at once. She wants me."

"She shall have you, since you have been so good as to come; but I want you first. Now, Harry, we are ready."

As he spoke he had led me into the dining room, where the fire and the table spoke a mute welcome; mute and bright; and now he began to take off my fur and my hat.

"O Mr. Iredell, I don't want anything. I will go up and see Olive, if you will let me."

"I will not let you, just yet," said he gently. "There,—sit down and get warm. At what hour did you have breakfast this morning?"

'About—I suppose it was half past five."

"And what *was* your breakfast?"

"Some very good sandwiches and coffee. Cold coffee. I had brought it from home."

"And it is now—look what o'clock. Do you think I shall let you go up stairs fasting? You are not fit to see Olive nor to talk to her. You must be amenable to reason. You were always that in old times."

I was under a kind of spell, and could but do as he bade me. Harry brought a luxurious meal for my refreshment, and I was fain to take it and be glad of it; Mr. Iredell taking his luncheon at the same time, and serving me with the kindest care. Like "old times." The spell upon me grew more and more spell-like; and a strange, subtle, keen pleasure, that was twin brother to pain of like quality, began to fill my heart and creep through all my nerves. The old presence that was wont to be so fascinating to me; there it was again, just the same, after all these years of interval; the tones of voice that I knew so well, I heard them with my bodily ears. The wise, keen, watchful eyes were upon me; I hardly dared meet them; the sweet, grave smile, so sweet and so gracious, gave me again an intense inward delight. It is a strange, peculiar feeling, to know that somebody is so very much to you, to whom yet you are, and wish to be, nothing. It crossed my mind as I sat there, that I had done well to stay all these years in Chesterfield; I could not endure much of this sort of experience; nevertheless, now that I was here and had it and for the moment must have it, there was something like a paradisaical sense of comfort and pleasure that stole over me, albeit mixed with that pain. Meanwhile,—what odd compositions we are, of mind and body!—I was eating sweetbreads and drinking coffee and finding myself very hungry and exhausted and the process of supply correspondingly agreeable.

"You are a naughty child, Desire, to have kept away from us so perseveringly," Mr. Iredell was saying. "How many years is it?"

"Ten."

"That was very wrong of you."

"No; it was just right."

"What have you been doing?"

"Following the Bible rule," said I lightly; "doing what my hands found to do."

"You are happy if you can," he returned. "My hands find a hundred-fold more to do than they can manage."

"That is because so many other hands are idle, which ought to be busy. Isn't it a strange thing, that so few people know the joy of work?—this work, I mean."

"And how is it with yourself, Desire?" he went on presently. "Work for others is not the only thing. How has it been with your own soul life and growth, all these years?"

Nobody in my life had ever asked me that question before. It gave me an inexpressible pleasure that Mr. Iredell should ask it; so right, and fitting, and good, I felt it to be.

"I think I have grown—" I said after a moment's pause.

"How?" he asked quickly.

"How can I tell?"

"Just as you can tell in other cases. By what tokens do you know that a plant is growing, or has grown? You cannot *see* it grow."

"I do not know—" I said doubtfully.

"Yes, you do. You notice that there is something there which there was not a little while ago. There is a tiny bud upstarting, where last week no bud was visible. There are streaks of red colour shewing themselves in a larger bud which last week was all green. Here a leaf has unfolded; there a spray has grown longer;—do you see?"

"Yes," I said now. "I see. I know."

"Tried by that rule, Desire?—"

"I have grown!" I said with my heart swelling. "I have learnt something, in all these ten years."

"Go on, won't you," he said as I stopped. And I wanted to go on now.

"I have learned, Mr. Iredell, that when Jesus said 'I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger,'—he did not mean a loss of appetite; but instead of that, he meant that to further and greater longings he would constantly give greater and richer satisfaction; so that life comes to be a continual feeding on him, and so that the more one wants, the more one has; and I don't see any end of it!"

Mr. Iredell's eyes lightened and shone.

"Have you learned that?" he said. "I may be content about you; for growth is known only by growing. Now I will let you go up and see Olive. She has been exceedingly eager for your coming, even restlessly eager; and I judged that she might not soon let you go when once she got hold of you. Are you rested and ready?"

I said quite, and went up stairs. In the passage however I met Olive's woman. She also expressed her gladness that I was come; Mrs. Iredell said, she reported, that she "could not die without seeing me"; but her mistress was sleeping now, and as she had passed a miserable night she thought it would be advisable to let her sleep her sleep out. With which judgment I fully agreed, and so went on to my own room. The same I used to have; my dear old room; a fine fire burning for me, every preparation made for my comfort, and even a particular easy chair of Olive's, *very* easy, had been moved up here for my benefit. So the woman said; Mrs. Iredell had insisted on it; and I let myself sink into its soft depths, and looked into the fire, and meditated. The woman's words had startled me; "Mrs. Iredell said she could not die without seeing you, ma'am." Did Olive feel herself really so ill? But she was apt to talk despondingly about herself, I knew from her letters. I was glad to be here. I might give her some comfort. But no longer than for her comfort would I stay. On that I was determined. I meditated till I was tired of that, and took to writing.

Jan. 7.

THE afternoon was waning when Benson came to call me, and I hurried down. Olive's room was in dim light already; the curtains so shaded

the windows, and the windows look to the east. Olive was propped up on pillows, dainty as usual with white ruffling and embroidery and lace; but in the twilight I could not well see how she looked. She received me with a kind of a cry—

"O Desire!—O Desire!—O Desire!—"

—so plaintive, and glad, and pitiful, at once, that I did not know what to make of it, nor how to understand it, nor how to answer it. There was fulfilled longing, but there was besides what sounded like a longing unfulfilled; or I could not tell what. I took her in my arms and kissed her, as quietly as I could, for I thought she was excited. And she was excited, very much. After kissing me and receiving my kisses she held me back to look at me.

"Desire, Desire!" she repeated. "You are not changed."

"I must be," said I lightly; "after so many years."

"No, you are not changed—unless for the better," said she, looking at me and holding me back still. "So many years! I have grown old; and you —O, Desire, Desire!"—

She took her hands from my shoulders and put them over her face. It was a tone of longing and sorrow.

"Well, I am here now," I said as gently as possible. "How do you do, Olive?"

"Why would you never come before?"

"I could not. I thought it not best. My work

and my place were there, I thought. There was nothing to hinder your coming to Chesterfield, though."

"Yes, there was."

"Naturally, I could not see it."

"I did not want ever to be in Chesterfield again."

"So it seemed to me, Olive. But I did not see why."

"I am going to tell you."

"Never mind now," said I, seeing her flushed and exhausted. "Tell me what ails you; and what are you doing for yourself?"

"What ails me? I don't know. Sometimes I think it is half mental. And that's as bad as anything;—worse, to manage."

"Why should it be mental, dear?"

"I don't know. Sometimes I think, if things had been different, maybe I should have been a different woman, in body as well as in mind. I don't know!"

"If what things had been different? What could you have wished for, Olive, that you have not had?"

"Just what you have had, Desire."

"I?"—She spoke riddles to me. What a turning of tables was this. I asked her softly, what I had had, that she had wanted?

"I am going to tell you, if I can. Before you came, I thought I would tell you as soon as I saw you; now I find it is not so easy."

She sighed, and turned on her pillow wearily.

"Wait, Olive," I said. "Wait, my dear, till you feel like it. There is no hurry."

"Till I feel like it—" she repeated slowly.

The door opened at this moment and Benson appeared with the announcement, "The doctor, ma'am." With the doctor came also Mr. Iredell. As they sat down, or at least the doctor did, in my chair, I thought the interview promised to be of some length; and I presently left the room and went down stairs. I had a desire to see the library again. The evening was closing in now, and the room was in darkness and firelight; the firelight shining upon the dark bindings of books and the little leather strips which covered the shelf edges, and the furniture giving it back in warm reflections. The room was just the same as I had used to see it; and I sank down into an easy chair beside the study table, and looked, and let thoughts sweep over me. A kind of glamour was stealing upon my mind and senses; ten years ago and now were getting strangely mixed up and interchanged; the sight of these familiar rooms and things and the presence of the master of them were in a sort bewitching to me. As I said, I found a very subtle and deep pleasure flowing into my heart, along with another feeling as intimate and deep, that had the bite of pain. Yet I had thought *that* pain quite killed and dead. Ten years! Ten years, Desire, since you were a brave young thing here looking at Doré's illustrations of the Bible; or listening to Mr. Iredell's reading, or to his talk. Ten

years! You are not a young thing any longer, but a steady woman of thirty years old. The winters and summers of ten years have gone over you; gone by, with their work and their rest, yes, and their peace; it has not been earthly joy, such as you once could have imagined, but it has been peace; and you have very softly and gently come to be twenty-nine years old;—what are you crying for now?—For tears were gathering, most unbidden, in my eyes, and dripping upon my hands in my lap; big tears, that filled and fell one after another, glittering in the firelight.—What do you mean? Nothing in the world do you wish changed,—nothing in the world; you are utterly content with things as they are; God's choice is better than your choice; what means this sentimental pity for that girl Desire of eighteen years old?—

I do not know what it meant. I think we human creatures are very complicated and difficult to understand. I know my tears welled up, big and bright, as they had not been seen for many a day, and all apropos to nothing. I believe however that Olive's talk was somehow remotely connected with the source of them. And there is another inexplicable thing. I had no idea what she was going to tell me; yet from her words and tones and manner generally I got a kind of fear of what it would be; a sort of shadow of what might be coming.

But I did not allow myself long in this indulgence of tears. I pulled myself up from such soft-

ness, and dried my eyes, and smiled at myself. No, I wanted nothing in the world changed, as far as my own individual life and fortunes were concerned. And the Desire of twenty-nine years old was a happier woman than Desire at nineteen. So much ground had not been gone over for nothing; I had come to smooth going, easy and sweet to the feet; where if there was "Jesus only," I had found and knew him to be more than enough. So I reviewed the particular piece of my road to which I had come now, and what was to do here. To minister to my sister, all I could. That first, and let it take what time it might. Then, back to Chesterfield, and as soon as I might. I heard the doctor come down and go out, and I returned to Olive.

"Your physician makes long visits," I remarked

"He gets into talk with Mr. Iredell."

"Is that good for you?"

"I believe they think so. Dr. Firlefanz thinks my nerves are to blame. I suppose he watches me under cover of talk, though sometimes he forgets me and gives all his attention to Mr. Iredell. He did to-day."

"You should stop them."

"I had as lief they should talk as do anything else."

"When do you have your dinner?"

"O at one o'clock."

"Then when do you have tea?"

"Now. But I am tired of everything."

"Tired of tea?"

"It is never good."

"I will make it now, and see if you will say that again."

"You cannot."

"Why?"

"The tea must be made where the kettle is; and you cannot go into the kitchen."

"I *have* been in such a place in my life. But I will have the kettle here. The kitchen is too far off. Tea and the kettle must not be at such an awful distance."

"O you cannot have it up here!"

"Pray why not?"

"You will make a muss."

"What if I do? You will have a good cup of tea. But I will make no muss, Olive. Benson, bring me up a little kettle with boiling water, and put it here before the fire, and I will take care of Mrs. Iredell's tea. What else do you have, Olive?"

"I have a roast oyster to-night. But they always come up overdone, or undone, or cold. They are never as we used to have them at Chesterfield."

"They shall be to-night. Benson, have the oysters nicely washed and bring them up uncooked. I'll see what I can do."

"Not here?" cried Olive. "You cannot roast oysters *here*, Desire?"

"Yes, indeed. Benson, I want besides a little gridiron; one on feet, if there is such a one in the kitchen."

"O you cannot do them here, Desire!" Olive

cried. "They snap and fly all over; think of the carpet."

"I do not think of the carpet, I think of you. But, Benson, you can bring me a druggett or a bit of old carpet to lay down before the fire. That will make all safe. You are not to look, Olive; you shall see results, not processes."

"O, Desire, they make such a smell where they are roasting."

"A very good smell. Give you an appetite."

"But it will stay in the room all night."

"It won't, for I will open the windows and bid it depart."

"Then I shall get my death of cold."

"Not at all; I'll cover you up while the oyster smoke is in the process of what the Germans call *auswanderung*."

I hardly expected she would give up the point so easily, but she said no more. She lay still and looked at me as I made my preparations. I tied on an apron, set a table near the bed, arranged my fire and placed my little gridiron. The fireplace was deep. I drew out a bed of coals back in the corner, and laid my oysters there; and as I hoped, the fumes went up chimney. But the snapping and sputtering and cracking penetrated into the room and came to Olive's ear. Benson stood by, wondering at me, I suppose.

"O how good that is!" Olive exclaimed. "It carries me back, ages! It reminds me of times when we were children."

"Doesn't it?" said I, taking an oyster from the fire. "Is your room full of smoke?"

"No; only just a little fragrance that is unspeakably good."

"Now, taste that,—" said I. "See if that is good too."

"I had forgotten that it was possible for anything to be so good," said Olive, after she had swallowed the oyster I presented to her. "And I have not tasted such a cup of tea since I was in Chesterfield. Nor then either, for the tea we had there was not of this quality. Desire, you are a wonderful woman!"

"Hardly proved by the present course of events," said I; "seeing I did not make the oysters, or the tea plant. Never mind me, but attend to your supper."

I had the satisfaction to see that she did. She made a very comfortable meal. I took off my apron then and washed my hands, and sat down by her, half hoping and half dreading that she would begin the subject broken off by the doctor's visit. She did not, however. She was silent. She lay on her pillows and looked at me. I could see now that she was thin and wasted. It went to my heart.

"You must go down to dinner," she said presently in a thoughtful way.

"I do not want any dinner. I will stay with you."

"No, you cannot. You must go down. Mr. Iredell is alone. But, Desire, come back and

stay with me to-night. I told Mr. Iredell you would."

"Isn't he a good nurse?"

"Too good," said Olive sighing. "He does not give himself rest enough, and he is more careful than he need be. I don't want you, or anybody, to watch; I only want you to sleep here."

I was unwilling enough to go down and dine tête-à-tête with Mr. Iredell. However, it seemed unavoidable, and I went. But the master of the house was very silent, for him; and all the first part of the dinner passed without my having anything to attend to but my plate. Then he did begin to talk, and kept it up; a grave talk, discussing Indian affairs and Dakotah missions in particular. After dinner he would have me go into the library and wait till prayers were over; he wanted my voice to lead in the singing, he said, and he had some new hymns he would like me to know. Prayer time was immediately after dinner now I was in an odd, unstrung sort of mood; for as the sweet notes of the organ and the voices carrying the melody rolled through the house, tears were again very near coming.

"It sounded so pretty," said Olive when I went up to her. "I don't know it. What were you singing?"

"Something I don't know—or did not know,

"'*She only touched the hem of his garment*'"—

And I softly sang the chorus—

"'Oh touch the hem of his garment,
And thou too shalt be free;
His saving power, this very hour,
Shall give new life to thee.'"

Olive sighed deeply, and remarked that Mr. Iredell and I were happy people.

She talked no more that evening. She never alluded to the something she had been so eager to bring out when I first came. I sat up till eleven o'clock, and then lay down beside her and went to sleep.

Jan. 9.

I SLEPT till rather late the next morning. It was full day when I awoke. Turning to look at Olive, I found her eyes fixed upon me. I smiled.

"How quietly you have been sleeping!" she said.

"Yes. And you?"

"I never do. I never did, like that. Desire, you have grown so beautiful!—"

"I? What do you mean?" I asked in marvelling astonishment.

"Yes, you have. I have been watching you for an hour. I should think an angel had come and drawn those lines round your brow and mouth. Such lovely lines, like a child, and yet like no

child that ever lived; just as sweet, but more noble, and more—I cannot tell what. You must be happy, Desire, to sleep so. Your life must be happy."

"My dear Olive!—And isn't yours?"

"My life?—Happy?—No, and it never has been. O Desire, I have missed happiness, somehow."

These words were spoken with a very pitiful accent. They cut my heart. It was as if she recognized some mistake in her endeavour after the ends of life, and bitterly bemoaned the failure.

"But Olive, dear Olive," said I bewildered, "why is that? How can it be true? You have had everything in the world to make you happy."

"What makes people happy?" she asked drily.

"Only one thing, I know," I answered thoughtfully. "Nothing will do it really, but the knowledge of Christ and the love of him."

"Well, I have not had that. You have."

"Olive, dear, why have not you?"

"I was seeking something else—" she said.

"You know your mistake now. How long have you known it?"

"How long?" she said absently. "O Desire, I have been struggling and fighting with my mistake, until the struggle has worn me down."

"Take the remedy now, Olive.

> "'*She only touched the hem of his garment,*
> *As to his side she stole.—*'"

"Yes. The best remedy now is for me to die.

Won't you get up, Desire, and give me my breakfast? What are you going to give me this morning?'

I obeyed her wishes as fast as I could. It was not so easy to find an answer to her last query about breakfast; she had so many objections to everything I proposed. Her fancy was at last hit by a Welsh rabbit and coffee; and as the physician put no veto upon any article of food for her, I did her pleasure, and prepared what I had only proposed in jest or in desperation. But Olive liked her breakfast, and it seemed to agree with her. She certainly liked my cookery, which was a certain gratification. But not another bit of serious talk with her did she let me have, all day.

This morning, after breakfast and after the room had been put up, and the maid was gone, and I sat beside the bed with some work in my hand, she began again of her own accord. She was lying comfortably propped up on her pillows, and had been surveying me and things in general for a while with observant eyes. Then she spoke.

"So you think, Desire, that having all they want is enough to make people happy?"

"I never said so," I replied, looking up. "I know better. That is, if what they want is the things of this world."

"You know better," she repeated slowly. 'How do you know better?"

"By experience. The only possible way, I suppose."

'By experience!" said Olive, again repeating my words. "That means, then, that you have tried it. Which way have you tried it?"

"How do you mean?"

"My meaning is plain enough. You must know it by one of two ways. Either you have had all you wanted,—or you have not had it. Which way, Desire?"

"Nobody has everything he wants,—except you," said I smiling.

"Then *you* have not had all you wanted?" The question was put rather keenly.

"No," said I. "Did you think I had? Nobody has, as I said, except you."

"What have you wanted, Desire, that you have not had?"

"I do not look unhappy, do I?"

"No."

"Then you may be satisfied about me; don't you think so? My face tells the truth. Whatever I may ever have wished for, that has not been given me, I am absolutely content with the decision, Olive. I do not wish anything different now from what it is. I can trust my Father in heaven thoroughly; and what he does not think good to give me, Olive, *I do not want.*"

I met her eyes as I spoke, and her eyes met mine, eager, piercing, questioning, and not satisfied. I think the water stood in mine as I finished, and I cast my eyelids down.

"You don't tell me,—" said Olive low.

"What?"

"What I asked you. Why shouldn't you tell me? If you are perfectly content, why can't you tell me *what* it is that you have wished for, and not had?"

"What is the use?" said I, endeavouring to speak lightly.

"To please me. That is use enough. You will not have much more chance. And to anybody so near going out of this world as I am, you may tell anything."

"Why, Olive," said I, "take one thing. I have lived in Chesterfield. Do you think a life in Chesterfield meets and satisfies all my tastes, and all the possibilities of my mental nature?"

"You mean—?" said Olive slowly and eyeing me.

"I mean various things. I love knowledge. I love culture. I love—little as I know of it, I love art; and I dearly love the sort of society in which all these things are at home, and live, and grow. Chesterfield has hills and valleys and sky and fields; I love them too; but you know how far Chesterfield life is from those other things. Not entirely from culture, but from elegant culture."

"I suppose then Mr. Iredell's society is just what suits you?"

"It seems to me," I said calmly, "it suits everybody. Did you ever see anybody whom it did not suit?"

"And you specially, of course."

"Perhaps it is a compliment to myself," I replied, "but I hope it is true."

"I don't think it is true of me," Olive said slowly. I looked up at her in astonishment.

"Yes," she repeated. "I do not think it is. I do not care so very greatly for all those things you mention. I did not when I married him. I cared for *him*—but for pictures and music and landscape-gardening and poetry, even for knowledge, I did not care so very much. I was willing to hear him talk about anything, but I could have wished he had chosen other subjects."

"What subjects?" I asked, in unfeigned surprise; for I never remembered at any time wishing that Mr. Iredell would change either his subject or his manner of handling it. Olive hesitated.

"I suppose I was not good enough for him,—" she said then. It was said in a humble, lowly way, different from her usual one, and to my great surprise I saw a tear escape from under the lowered eyelid and roll slowly down her cheek.

"My dear Olive!" I exclaimed, greatly touched and pained,—"I am sure he never thought so."

"Do you remember," she went on presently, "how I once talked about getting a new carpet for the drawing room?"

"Yes!"

"I did it."

"Did what?"

"Got the new carpet."

"Well?—" said I breathless.

"I got it without asking Mr. Iredell."

"Why did you not ask him?"

"I thought he would not like it, and *then* I could do nothing. I ordered it and had it brought, and the old one taken up and the new one put down, one time when he was away in New York on business. When he came home I took him in and shewed it to him."

She paused, and I waited, in dismayed astonishment, both at her perverseness and at her daring.

"He looked at it, and he looked at me. And he said not a word. And his face did not change, except I saw a little surprise in it. I asked him if he liked what I had done. He said only 'no,' but though it was said as quietly, more quietly, Desire, than I am speaking to you, you never heard a 'no' that had more of a negative in it"

"Well," said I obstinately, "it is done now—"

"He said he was not sure of that. Was it paid for? I said it was not. How much was the cost? I had to say, for I happened to know. The bill had been sent in, and I said so, and that now there was nothing to be done but to pay it. He answered, that before he paid it I must tell him that it was the best use he could make of the money. I said that now it was the *only* use; the carpet was made and down and the bill rendered; but he said I must hear first what he had to say. So he made me sit down, there and then; and then he gave me such a string of things as I can never tell you again. He

told me of six distressed families of ministers in one of the Indian missions; at least *I* should call it distress, to have a family to feed and clothe and no more to do it with. That was one thing. He told me of a young man, son of an old servant of his mother, who wanted to study for the ministry, and had no means. That was another. Stop!—I think there were six things he told me of. Another was the case of an old lady, who had been teaching all her life for her living, and now was past the strength to work any longer. I asked him what he wanted to do for her? He said that a small yearly sum would put her above want and beyond care, and allow her to end her days in comfort. 'She ought to have laid up money,' I said, 'if she has been teaching all her life.' 'The pay is not large,' he answered; 'and she has had others to take care of.' Then he gave me a case of a young lady, educated and refined and capable for much higher work, whom he knew of, who could get nothing better to do than making buttonholes of shirts, for one of the cheap clothing establishments, at thirty cents for *five hours' work*—think of it!—and a mother to support. I think those cheap clothing establishments ought to be indicted. Is that four? Then the next thing was a man, a tradesman in a small way I believe, who had been reduced to very low circumstances, and threatening ruin, by a series of misfortunes; and who needed only a little capital to set him agoing again. And the last case was that of a mechanic with a large family, who was

out of work and near starving. Oh, and there was another; a poor woman who was ill and needed to be received into one of the cure places in the country, under good care, for three or perhaps six or nine months. I asked him whether he would propose to make paupers of the artisan's family? He said no; he would simply give the man work and pay him for it. 'But you are not a manufacturer in that line, Mr. Iredell,' I said.

"'No,' said he; 'but I am acquainted with one who is.'

"'You can follow your pleasure,' said I. 'What has all this to do with my carpet?'

"He smiled and said his property was large, but he could not do everything.

"'Do you want to do everything?' I asked.

"He said 'yes.'

"I said that was doing more than his share. And he asked what his 'share' was?

"'I do not know what it amounts to,' I said; 'that is for you to judge of; but I mean, your fair proportion of the work to be done, letting other people do the rest.'

"'Suppose they will not?'

"'Then you cannot help it.'

"'I can help one or two of these people, though, of whom I have told you, with the money you would pay to Mr. Axminster.'

"'And have *I* not a right to something?' I said, growing impatient. And he kissed me and said yes, but not against his duty or honour.

"'Duty or honour?' said I. 'How do they come in at all?'

"Then he looked very grave and said, because he was only a steward; that his money was not his, except to use, and that he was bound to use it for the Master's business. I knew it would serve nothing for me to talk any longer, when he took that tone.

"'Well,' said I, 'what do you wish me to do? Here is the carpet down. Mr. Axminster will not take it back again.'

"'Not without a trifling honorarium; but it is an uncut carpet luckily. I do not think you will have any trouble about that.'

"'And what am I to give as my reason?'

"'Any allegation that is true,' he said smiling again. But I was terribly vexed, Desire.

"'Shall I tell him you will not let me have it?'

"Then he laughed, and said he would not advise me to give Philadelphia such a nice bit to talk about. And he went off and left me there, to settle it as I could. Now what do you think of us both, Desire?"

What was the use of my saying what I thought? I made no answer.

"I suppose you agree with Mr. Iredell?"

"So do you," I said,—"now."

"I don't! I don't at all. Even an Indian squaw is mistress in her wigwam."

"But you are not precisely an Indian squaw, you see. The cases are different."

"They ought to be different in my favour, then

Well, it will soon be over, and it does not matter much now. Only I wish—"

She did not say what, and I did not ask. After some little interval she turned to me again.

"To go back to what we were talking of—Desire, you might tell me, *now*,—did you ever love anybody?"

I knew how she was looking at me, and I hesitated a bit; feeling the extreme difficulty and danger of answering.

"If I ever did," I said at last, "it is a thing swallowed up and buried long ago;—and I never think it is best to unearth buried troubles and look at them."

"But with you, Desire, I know you, such a feeling might be buried, but it would not be killed. It would live on."

"It has not broken or spoiled my life," said I, meeting her eyes full. "My life has not been an empty or an unhappy one; not a failure; on the contrary, it has been rich and sweet and full of peace and with a great deal of pleasure."

"In Chesterfield!"

"Yes, in Chesterfield. I can and do, sing songs in my heart all the day—most days. Don't you know it is written—'He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst'?"

"How comes it that so many Christians do not find that?" said Olive querulously.

"Because they do not try it, it must be."

Olive turned restlessly on her pillow, and there was a long, long silence.

Jan. 15.

THERE is no change, that I can see. Olive is ill, evidently, and restless and uneasy; but this latter seems to me mental more than bodily. It makes her hard to please, easy to irritate, captious, and sleepless. She is never irritated with me, by the way; and she wants me to be by her side all the time, night and day. Her supper is not right if I do not cook it; her breakfast is not eatable if I do not first see that it is, or make it so; no hand can put her pillows right but my hand; and yet, I do not give her ease. I sometimes almost think I am a disturbing element in her mental life, though I do not see how. She lies and looks at me, by the hour together, in silence; then she will get me to talking. She has never, I am sure, come back to what she was going to tell me, that first night of my arrival; and I have not alluded to it, though I often think of it.

"So Arethusa Hildreth has been with you all this time?" she began the other day, after a prolonged silence, during which I was working beside her. I answered in the expected affirmative; indeed Olive knew the fact as well as I did.

"How could you stand her?"

"Why not?" said I smiling.

"O her ways! and her figure; her eyes and her hair, and her mouth. It used to put me in a rage, just to look at her mouth."

"Why?"

"It is one-sided. Don't you know, she speaks out of one corner of it?"

"She cannot help that," I said, in some amusement.

"But you need not be obliged to see it."

"She has been rather a pleasant thing to see, all these years; she has been so happy. Poor thing, she never had a comfortable home before. It is nice to see people happy."

"How about yourself?"

"O I have been happy," I answered.

"Living in Chesterfield! I cannot get over it. What did you do with yourself, all the time?"

"Little enough time for what there was to do."

"Tell me. What did you do?"

"Why you know, Olive. Made butter."

"Who made the bread?"

"I."

"You had no servant at all?"

"I had somebody come to wash."

"And iron?"

"We did our own ironing."

"And washing dishes, and everything?"

"Yes. Why not? That was pleasant enough too, Olive. Days went by very smoothly."

"No monotony, I suppose?"

'Not much. You see, bread and butter are always bread and butter, it is true; but outside of the house there are always changes. One person gets sick and another person gets well; there are your class to look after, and the Teachers' meeting to be

ready for, and to enjoy when it comes. And the seasons change; and every change brings its own beauties and pleasures."

"And worries."

"No; leave that out. I didn't worry."

"Was the rent of the farm always sufficient for your wants?"

"Some years I had to hold in a little. But we got along very well."

Olive groaned. "And you never told me!" &

"Of course not. There was no need."

"What *could* you 'hold in,' when already you kept no servant?"

"Now, Olive, put that out of your head and stop thinking about it. I had always a superb fur cape to wear in cold weather."

"Bread and butter and Teachers' meetings!' said Olive. "And that for you, who love art and science and literary society! While I have had them, who don't care for them. Is not life—are not things—confused and twisted and out of place?"

"No," said I. "Not as far as my affairs are concerned. I have been singing all these years, 'The Lord is my Shepherd.' Don't he know what pasture is good for his sheep? I had study, besides, Olive."

"What did you study? what could you study, there?"

"Hebrew,—and German, as I could; and French; and history, likewise as I could;—and the Bible."

"While I have had books and opportunities, and

teachers, if I had wanted them; and I did nothing. Isn't life cross?"

"No, Olive, it is straight, to those who do not make it crooked."

"I made it crooked," said she sorrowfully. But she said no more.

April 2.

SO many days and weeks have come and gone. And all after the same fashion as the first ones. It is three months now since I came here; three months of constant attendance at Olive's sick bed. For she has been a sick and a suffering woman, though how much of the whole was due to a mental cause I could not tell. I thought, a large portion of it. Olive's weary restlessness never abated. It was on her by night and by day. At night, if I chanced to wake, I could hear her sigh, sighs that went to my heart; and in the day her eyes followed me about with a strange, longing, regretful look which I could not understand. Poor Olive! She has explained it at last.

All these weeks I have been in constant attendance on her. At night I slept by her side; by day she eat nothing that I did not prepare, and had nothing done for her that I did not do. Even her husband was no exception. Indeed I fancied that his presence was hardly welcome to her; she certainly did not seek to have it more frequent

While she craved mine, and clung to me like a child. It was not like Olive as I had known her at any former time of our lives, and it touched me sadly. Olive never depended on any one before; least of all on me. And then she watched me, how she watched me! lying with still observant eyes while I worked beside her; following me as I moved. She has explained it all at last.

Her nights when I first came were tolerably restful. I slept beside her usually with very little disturbance from the time I went to bed till the morning broke again. Of late she has been growing more unquiet; growing also weaker, I feared. She made few calls upon me, but I knew that she did not sleep. Last night as I was arranging her hair and her pillows before lying down myself, I kissed her and expressed the hope that she would get some better sleep than she had had lately.

"I shall not sleep at all," she said; and her intent, weary eyes smote my heart.

"Why do you say that?"

"I cannot rest."

"Why not, Olive? what hinders you?"

"I am quite wide awake."

"Then I will not go to bed yet. We will talk till you get sleepy."

"It is no use," said she. "I shall never rest again. At least, until I have told you something."

"Told me?" said I, speaking lightly though I did not feel so. "There can be nothing you have to tell me, that need trouble you, my dear.'

"You do not know what it is."

"No, and I don't care about knowing."

"But I must tell you," she said sighing. "O Desire, do you remember, when we were children, how I always had my own way? what an utterly selfish child I was?"

"Children are apt to be selfish," I said. "My dear, you are not thinking of that now!"

"I have carried it on all my life, Desire; I have carried it on all my life. I have had my own way, except when Mr. Iredell would not let me have it; and now,—I can't have it any longer. I am broken, and life is done; and it hasn't been worth living!"

"O Olive, don't speak so! You do not think so, either; you do not mean it. Dear Olive, who has had sweeter or fairer things to make a happy life, than you have had?"

"I paid a price for them too," said she bitterly.

"What can you mean, my dear?"

"I am going to tell you.—If I can. It is hard, Desire."

"Then don't do it. I do not want to hear anything, dear, that you do not want to tell me."

"I must tell you. I sent for you that I might tell it to you. Only when you came, I could not."

She put her hands up to her head, drawing the hair back from her face and holding them there. I waited now.

"O," she said, "this is punishment!—"

There began to come a vague feeling of fear

upon me. I cannot tell fear of what, but I could not speak.

"Desire," she began again, "do you believe that all sins find their reward, their reward of punishment, I mean, in this life?"

"I do not know," said I. "No, I think not. Why, Olive?"

"Mine have—" she returned.

"We have all done things to be sorry for," I said, as she paused there; "most people have made mistakes, and mistakes often draw on consequences. I do not know what particular sins you have to charge yourself with."

"I am going to tell you. If I can. Sometimes I think I cannot."

"Then don't do it, Olive, my dear. I am not your confessor, and I am not curious. Don't do anything that troubles you."

"It troubles me worse, not to do it. Desire, sit so that I can see the light on your face."

I obeyed her wish.

"How lovely you are!" she said. "You always were; but you are more lovely now than you used to be. Every line—Did that quiet face of yours ever know storms?"

"If it did, Olive, they are passed."

"Are they?—Desire, I am going back, back, a long way; back over the years. Do you remember the first time you paid a visit to Caroline in Philadelphia?"

"Certainly."

"You were seventeen or eighteen."

"Seventeen."

"Yes; very young. You remember all about that visit?"

Well I did; but I said nothing.

"You came home at last; and then, soon after, Caroline was taken ill and sent for me."

"Yes."

"I staid a good while, you know. That was the first of my seeing Mr. Iredell. I saw a good deal of him, and I liked him, and I thought he liked me. He did, I am sure."

I was silent, catching my breath short now.

"Before I came away in the spring,—that spring,—he enquired a little particularly whether we expected to be in our home at Chesterfield all summer; and whether he might come to see us there, if he found himself so far north in the latter part of the season. I drew my conclusions—was it very strange if I did?—and you know, after I got home, how I dressed up the house. It was to receive him."

She paused, and I waited, trembling.

"Then, Desire, then came that letter to you. Do you remember?"

I bowed my head.

"I was nearly beside myself, that the letter should be to you. I think I *was* beside myself; with what, I don't know. It was not all pure affection. I had regarded the writer of that letter as my personal property; I had supposed, surely

he thought of me in the same way. I had been accustomed always, from childhood, to have the first and the best of everything, and to leave you the second best. I could not take the second place now. It seemed as if I *could* not. I was like a bear robbed of her whelps, I think; possessed by a kind of madness. You know how I came in and got that letter from you?"

"Yes—" I said, or breathed.

"You did not know how I answered it, but I suppose you guessed. I will tell you now. I wrote him that you had left it to me to answer;—that spoke of itself, you know;—I said we should be very glad to see him in Chesterfield; but I worded it so as to avoid giving him the impression that you would take any particular part in the gladness. I certainly did not say *I* would, either; but the whole was intended to put him off the track I supposed he was on. I wrote it and sent it, and you asked nothing about it. I did not expect you would.

"I knew he would come, nevertheless. I felt sure he would; but I knew from words he had said to me just before I left Philadelphia, that it would not probably be till some time in August—some time in the latter half of August. Before that time came, you were gone. I had got you safe in Boston, or near Boston."

I could say nothing. I felt as though a hand were grasping my heart, and with every sentence griping it harder and harder. A sort of compres-

sion, it seemed to be, which almost hindered my breathing. Olive pushed her hair further off her temples; her cheeks were getting a red feverish spot on each one.

"You remember how I sent you off. You went, unsuspiciously enough; and I staid and waited, with the coast clear. Then he came. I was sure he would come. It was the third week in August.

"I had a jealous foreknowledge that he would attack me about you. So he did, immediately. He wanted to know the meaning of the letter I had written, to answer his; what *you* meant by it? I told him—" She paused.

"What?"

"I told him you were very young. That was true, he knew. I told him you were too young to take up any such ideas in connection with himself; that you were like a child; with no thought of love or lovers or being married, and with no present readiness for such thoughts. I told him that whatever liking you had for him and had shewn, as you were ready to shew it to anybody for whom you felt it, the liking was not of the kind he meant and wished, but a simple childlike good will, and interest in his conversation. I told him all that, Desire. And I did not at the time know that it was true; and though I tried to make myself believe it, I did not believe it. I made him believe it, though. And I would not let him write to you again or try to see you, as he wished to do. I told him it was no use, and he must not. He would just disturb you.'

There came a long pause here, which I could not break. Olive lay with her hands above her head, drawing slow, oppressed breaths; the oppression was mental in its origin, I knew; and I sat motionless, with that stricture round my heart; which was swelling meantime with a rising current of new feeling, in the flood of which the compression was like to give way.

"I kept you safe in Boston," Olive went on; "and I waited to see how things would turn. You know how it was; and yet you don't know, and *I* do not know. Mr. Iredell asked me to marry him, at last; but *why* he asked me—I never knew, and it has been one of the torments of my life."

"It could have been only because he loved you, dear," I said, commanding myself to speak, difficult as it was.

"Yes—" said Olive,—"he loved me, for he said so; and he is true; but—I stole it. His love never would have turned my way, if I had not stopped up the other channel."

We were both silent again.

"There was a verse I heard Mr. Iredell quote one day, soon after we were married; it has rung in my head all the years since. Of course he quoted it without the most distant allusion to me, but I made the application for myself. Do you remember it? it runs—'He that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong'—. It has rung in my head by night and by day. Then with that feeling of having wronged you, grew up a jeal-

ousy of you. Do you recollect how I never would let you keep any of Mr. Iredell's gifts?"

I did not answer, and she went on.

"They made me mad. I never could endure you to have them. Only I saw that you were so utterly innocent, or I could not have borne you in the house. Did you want to have them—those things —very much?"

"Yes,—" I said softly.

"I might have left you so much. O Desire! I have spoiled your life, and I have not mended my own!"

She put her hands over her face. I drew them away, and bent down and kissed the weary lips and cheeks.

"You have not spoiled my life, dear," I said. "Don't let those words run in your head any more. My life has been sweet and happy and good and rich; I have not wanted anything that was good for me. My life has not been spoiled. Nothing can do that for the Lord's people. He knows how to turn darkness to light for them; and if he does not exactly turn bitter to sweet, yet he makes sweet fruit grow on bitter branches. You have no need to worry about me."

"You are almost an angel, Desire," said my sister. "It seems to me I can feel your invisible wings fanning me. But was there a bitter time, then?"

"Sweet fruits have grown out of it, if there was. Never mind that now. There has been no bitter in my life this many a day; only content and joy

Olive. Olive, my dear, you have not spoiled my life."

"There's another life I have half spoiled," she said. "Mr. Iredell's. I have not been the right wife for him."

"Let all that alone now Look at what is good, and forget what has troubled you. I will forget it, Olive."

But she lay on her pillows with a mournful, weary, hopeless face; and slowly I saw the tears gather under her eyelids, and one by one they passed their barriers and came stealing down her cheeks.

"Will you feel better, now you have eased your mind of this burden, and made your confession to me?" I said, trying to speak lightly and easily. "Is this what has been troubling you and making you ill, and will you gain strength after this?"

"Strength?" she repeated. "No, I guess not. I shall have some strength, I hope,—some; I have had some to-night."

"And you feel better?"

"I shall never feel better."

I brought her some nourishment, which she swallowed; and then, putting her hands to her face as before, she rolled herself over on her pillows, as if to hide herself from me. For me, I lay down at last beside her, with a tumult in my heart which only grew with thinking. I tried not to think; what use, when fancy and memory made themselves so busy with the new stuff given them. I believe poor Olive got to sleep before I did.

April 10.

I HALF hoped Olive would improve, after she had relieved herself by her revelation to me that night. But, strangely, it seemed to have worked the other way. She was not relieved; rather she seemed oppressed by the fact that she had made it. What spirit and life she had shewn before, was now dwindled and shrivelled away. I suppose she could not endure the knowledge that anybody else knew her secret. I saw that she was losing ground from day to day; and once I expressed my sorrow and disappointment to her. "Yes," she said, "I knew I should not last much longer; else I could not have got up courage to talk to you." I nursed her hour by hour with the utmost care. I hardly went down stairs at all; and latterly hardly slept at night. The last night but one of her life she sent me away and would have her husband with her; assuring me with a faint smile that he was as good a nurse as anybody. The last night we both stayed beside her. Poor Olive! She received our kisses, first his and then mine, and passed away very quietly in the gray of the morning. I think she was glad to go; and I think she went holding fast the promise which never disappointed anybody yet.

I staid with her till I could even watch beside her remains no longer; and then came to Caroline's for a little rest. But I am going home next week. I am like a country that has been convulsed by

an earthquake; I hardly know what is left standing firm, and what has been shaken down and broken to pieces. I want to get back to Chesterfield. Caroline would fain keep me here, but I will not be kept.

July 15.

I HAVE been at home three months. It is strange, but I have not yet got back to be just like my old self. At the time, I received Olive's communications with great outward composure; I hardly knew that they had taken such deep hold of me. But as days went on, after all was over and I had come away from the house, there began to grow a certain unrest in my mind. It was, I found, the unfolding and developing of a germ at first too small for me to be more than dimly aware of it. I did not know what to make of myself. Was I going to doubt, at this time of day, the kindness of the Lord's dealings with me? Was I *now* ready to rebel or repine under them? Yet there would sweep over me at times such a sense of the needlessness of all we had both gone through, Olive and I; such a pitiful sense of her loss—and of mine;—such an unanswered "why?" would rise up;—that I did what I have not done for years, sat down and cried. Another thought mingled with this and gave an additional bitter flavour; the thought that the third person concerned had lost nothing; that

he felt no loss, I mean; that he could transfer so readily feelings which it seems to me ought to be immoveable and inalienable, from one to another. Altogether, I have not been just happy since I came home. But this is sheer naughtiness and want of faith, and looking at second causes, which is great folly. I have striven and fought against it, and prayed. Nevertheless I have not got back my healthy energies yet. I do my work with a faint heart; things that used to be pleasant and ought to be pleasant, have lost their savour somehow. I am so sorry to dishonour my Master in this way! I do not mean that anybody sees it; outwardly, I guess, I am the same as usual; but he sees it; and that he should spy doubt of him, or unwillingness to accept his arrangements, in my heart, is a great grief to me. And such regrets and such slack-heartedness as I have felt, in reality can come from nothing else, where the physical condition is not in fault.

The roses and honeysuckle are blooming again. The scents of them come all round me as I write; and another scent, from the hay fields, faint and sweet and pure. O it is long ago to that summer when the letter came from Mr. Iredell. The roses and honeysuckle were in blossom then. Nature does not change. And O, Desire Burgoyne, God does not change. The roses are not so sweet as the breath of his love, which is always about you, and knows no winter of intermission; and the return of the roses is not more certain than the constancy of his kindness.

I have a strange feeling of missing Olive's letters. They were not frequent, ever; but now and then they came, and they kept up a connection, distant enough but real, with a world outside of Chesterfield and with something in that world that I liked to hear of. Caroline's letters never touch it. I feel more alone than I used to do. Well. When one of the Lord's children is suffered to feel lonely, that means that he is to seek his home more utterly in God. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." Yes, I am content.

I brought away my little properties from Philadelphia with me; my St. Cecilia, my Black Brunswicker, and my St. Mark's Rest; but I have left them packed up as I brought them. One day, perhaps, I may take them out and enjoy them; but the time is not now.

April 1.

NINE months, almost, since my last entry; and spring finds me with Mrs. Bowdoin. The winter was very busy and peaceful; looking back at my last writing I am ashamed of it; but I let it stand. It is good to know oneself. The winter was very peaceful, but there was a great deal of sickness in the valley, and I had a great deal of nursing to do. I believe the first thing that really cured me of my morbid mental condition was the being forced out of myself and my own affairs by

the needs of other people. Then Mrs. Bowdoin sent for me to take a trip to the South with her; she was going to Washington, and perhaps to Florida. I came two weeks ago, and found her not well enough to set out; and instead of growing better she has grown worse. So here I am installed as nurse again; and for the present with plenty to do; for Mrs. Bowdoin is a sick woman. The doctor fears typhoid fever.

It is a peculiar but a very positive pleasure, to take care of a sick person; that is, when one has the power and can do it without hindrance. There is a constant satisfaction in ministry, when one knows that everything is done for the comfort and welfare of the person concerned, and done perfectly. In Chesterfield I am sometimes met by blind opposition, an opposition not to be overcome, of ignorance and fear; and the opening of a window, for instance, which would be life, is looked upon as certain death. Then it is hard, to do one's best, and yet know that the very best cannot be done. But here I have it all my own way. Mrs. Bowdoin trusts me, the servants like me, and I rule despotically in the sick room. It is so pleasant to put the pillows in the most comfortable position; to keep things looking nice; to prepare and to give what is to be taken, just in the best way and at the right time; to refresh the weary face and hands with bathing; to make up the fire and let in the sweet, health-bringing air. For the season is cool enough still, and we need good fires; at the

same time the breath of spring is outside, and when I throw up the sash it meets me with a sort of love-greeting. It is so; I take it so. Do not all the Lord's works bring messages to us? This message comes specially sweet at this time; for I think of last April, and I remember the weary struggle of mind I went through afterwards. Now it is over. My old peace has come back again, firmer than ever. I "have known and believed the love that God hath to us"; and Spring seems to tell me of it, repeating it again and again with her sweet breath, every time I open the window. It is the only time she gets a chance, for I cannot leave Mrs. Bowdoin long enough to take even a very short walk.

June 1.

I HAVE had no chance to write for many days. The sickness developed into what the doctor had feared, and was a very serious case. There was more to do every day, and every night, than I could do without the concentration of all my energies; and after the worst danger was over I was too weary to write. I am very weary still. Every two hours the medicine; every two and a half hours the beef tea, by day and by night, at the minute; all the time the care of the fires and ventilation, till fires ceased to be needed, though the ventilation became more imperative; the daily

changing of beds and linen; the daily bathing, and ordering of Mrs. Bowdoin's long hair; directions to the servants, and keeping up the supply of beef tea, on which so much depended; my wits were at full strain and my nerves, all the while. Danger was present for many weeks; I knew it, but I had good hope nevertheless; and at last the disease took a turn for life, and Mrs. Bowdoin began again to be conscious of what went on around her. And then, presently, she began to desire food. That was a joyful change, from having to almost force her to swallow the beef tea. It is delightful to prepare eatables instead of medicine; but it keeps one almost as busy. However, I could throw myself down on the lounge between whiles and look at Mrs. Bowdoin; and she lay in her bed and looked at me. Talking was beyond both of us. Now, for some days, she has been sitting up a little while every day. The spring has marched on in the mean time, and marched off, and here is summer; and we have windows open sometimes for hours, without need of fires to keep up the temperature. But cold days come still between such days.

June 20.

THE cold days are heard of no more, and windows are open all the while. Roses are even blossoming, and I am still here. In truth Mrs. Bowdoin will not let me go. Until quite lately

my ministrations to her have continued; for she had to come back very gradually to ways of health, and has not yet ventured down stairs.

We have it very lovely however up in her dressing room. My own room opens out of it; so I am always at hand; and Mrs. Bowdoin's dressing room is a charming place; fitted up for cosy enjoyment, with every sort of pretty and pleasant thing. There, with the windows open upon the roses in the garden, we sit and read—or talk—and I work sometimes; but indeed I do not work much; and instead, sit with my hands before me oftener than I ever did in my life before. It seems, that as Mrs. Bowdoin's strength has come back, mine has gone away. Natural, I suppose, after these weeks. And to be sure, I had not been long out of other sick rooms at Chesterfield before I was called to hers.

To-day we were sitting so. The windows were open, and the scent of roses was pouring in and coming too from a great vase behind us on the table. Mrs. Bowdoin sat looking at me, and I was looking out of the window idly.

"Desire Burgoyne," she began abruptly in her old manner, "why were you never married?"

I turned to her and I believe smiled. "Mrs. Bowdoin," I said, "don't you think such things are in the Lord's hands?"

"All things," returned Mrs. Bowdoin quickly. "But in our hands too. Haven't we something to do with it?"

"I have not had anything to do with it," I said.

"I don't believe that!" she returned. "Desire, do you know what a handsome woman you are?"

I made no reply, and she went on. "You are; you are too good for the men, that is the truth. I don't know one that is fit to hold a candle to you; unless"—she paused. "Don't you mean ever to be married, Desire?"

"I think not, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"Why not?"

"Mrs. Bowdoin, I shall be thirty years old this summer, if I live a little longer."

"Nonsense. And you look about twenty; only for a certain something in your face," she said slowly,—"which is not age at all, nor fatigue, though you have almost killed yourself waiting on me; and I do not know what it is, only it is what one never sees in twenty years old. But it is lovelier than anything one can see in twenty years old. I should think"—she went on, considering me,—"I should think, you had some particular friends among the angels, and were accustomed to receive visits from them. Like Adam and Eve in Milton's Paradise."

"I have better than that," I answered with a little laughter; "I have the Lord himself; like Adam and Eve in the Bible Paradise."

"What do you mean?" she said sharply.

"Just what I say, Mrs. Bowdoin."

"You talk in riddles."

"I do not mean it. Will you open your Bible

there, at the fourteenth chapter of John, and read the twenty-first verse? Do you see the words, '*I will manifest myself to him*'? and a little further on, '*we will come to him*'? That is a few verses below."

"I never could attach any meaning whatever to those words," she answered. "Not distinctly, I mean."

"They are true," said I.

"Desire, I am afraid you are a little bit—what shall I call it?—extravagant; enthusiastic."

"Why?"

"I cannot give reasons for everything, like you. But I am not unreasonable, nevertheless. Desire, I want to make a bargain with you."

"What is it?"

"Will you make a bargain with me?"

"If I like the terms—" I said smiling.

"Do, Desire! My heart is set on it. I have been thinking about it as I lay in bed, and thinking about it as I sat here, for days and weeks."

I saw the water come into Mrs. Bowdoin's eyes. Wherewith I grew curious, and looked expectant.

"I want you to come and live with me."

"What am I doing?" I said smiling. "It seems to me I am living with you."

"I mean for ever;—for good. I want you for all the rest of my life. Desire, would that be hard for you? You are alone in the world. And I do not mean it as *pay;* but at my death I will leave you all I have. I will do it because there is nobody else I would so well like to leave it to as you."

"Thank you!" said I, feeling a good deal surprised and touched.

"Thank me for what? I have not done anything yet. Desire, will you come?"

She waited anxiously for my answer, but I could not give it at once.

"What are you thinking of?" she asked impatiently.

"Trying to weigh things," I said.

"What things?"

"Duties."

"What duties? You owe no duty to any living soul in the world. You can follow your own pleasure."

"If it were a mere question of abstract pleasure," I said, "it would be soon settled. Life here with you would be far easier than life alone in my own house."

"This shall be your own house," she repeated.

"Yes," said I; "that is very kind of you. But that is not all."

"What else is there, Desire?"

"Dear Mrs. Bowdoin, I heard it said a great while ago, and I have never forgotten it, that 'Life is, to do the will of God.' The real question for me is,—where I can do most work, or be of most use."

"Why here, of course, with more means to do everything," she said watching me.

"Money isn't all," I said shaking my head. "You don't know how much in Chesterfield seems to de-

pend on me. And how do I know," I added smiling, "whether my head could stand so much ease, and so much of what the world calls prosperity?"

"Desire, that is all simple nonsense. Tell me you will come, and be my child!"

"I will think about it, Mrs. Bowdoin," I said kissing her.

"Where did you get that sentence from, that you quoted just now?" she asked after a minute.

I believe I hesitated a quarter of a second, wishing I had not quoted it; but I had to answer,—

"I heard Mr. Iredell say it once."

"It sounds like him. What is he doing with himself?" she asked after another pause.

"Doing? Mr. Iredell? What he always did, I suppose."

"Do you never hear from him?"

"Never! How should I?"

"The post carries letters still," she said shortly.

"Yes, but there is nothing now that he should write to me about."

"Does Caroline speak of him?"

"No; not at all."

"Then you do not know how he bears his loss?"

"No. But he is sure to bear it like a good man."

"Do you know," said Mrs. Bowdoin, "good men are great geese sometimes?"

With that she broke off the conversation; and I wondered greatly what she could mean.

July 6.

I GAVE a good many thoughts to Mrs. Bowdoin's proposition. She wisely let the subject alone, and I pondered it; but I believe, the more I pondered the deeper I got in perplexity. There is plenty to be urged on the side of her wish; she is alone, and I am alone in the world; each of us would enjoy being with the other and belonging to the other. O yes, it is rather a sorrowful thing to *belong* to nobody. Pleasure is all on that side of the question. The ease of life would be a very different thing here with means, from what it is in Chesterfield with next to none. Things that I like are to be had here and done here; things I can enjoy very little at home, or hardly at all. And with plenty of money, how much is possible! I should have plenty; and at Mrs. Bowdoin's death, if I outlive her, I should have the whole. *But*— after all, would my work and influence here tell for as much as it does in Chesterfield? There it tells for a good deal; I know it does; in the Sunday school, in the Teachers' meeting, in the missionary work, in the neighbourhood generally. And can I be sure, that if I were transplanted into these luxurious circumstances, I should keep true to my ministry? free from the insidious, creeping influence of custom and use around me? I *might*, for Mr. Iredell does; but have I any business to choose voluntarily a position of trial? If it is chosen for one, that is another matter. It all

comes back to the question, where can I do most work for my Master?—and I do not yet see the decision.

Meanwhile a previous step has been made necessary, which may perhaps lead me to see better about the taking of that one. It is the Lord's way to lead us one step at a time; so after I have taken this first, I hope I shall be in condition to take the next intelligently.

We were sitting together, Mrs. Bowdoin and I, yesterday morning. Not in her dressing room this time, but down stairs in the hall; her recovery has got so far. Both doors were open, to let all the air through that would come, for the day was extremely warm; and with the breeze came also a perfect wealth of summer sounds and summer scents and colouring. A glimmer from green foliage steeped in sunlight; a glitter from white lilies; brilliant pendants of gold hanging from a laburnum just opposite the door; the flicker of butterflies' wings, the twitter and trill of song sparrows and a cat bird, and the sweetness from a whole garden full of blossoms. All came in with the warm air, in lavish luxury of beauty and sound. We were sitting silent, both of us quietly taking the enjoyment of it; and I confess the sound of a foot on the gravel walk and tripping up the piazza steps, was to me at least anything but welcome. It was a lady's foot, I knew.

"Visiters—" said Mrs. Bowdoin under her breath.

"Will you see them?"

"O yes.—Ha, Ernestine! is that you? I am glad to see you. Come in."

And there tripped in at the open door to be sure, the very identical little lady I had had occasion to know here and elsewhere once before. Since my first visit to Olive, now ten or eleven years ago, I had never seen her. I knew that she had married a wealthy Bostonian; that was nearly all I knew; at the time of my last stay in Philadelphia she was, I believe, in Washington. Now here she was again, just the same creature as of old; one glance shewed me that. A little worn; the lines of cheek and temples were hollowed somewhat in the world's hard service; but except that, the same; the eyes were as glittering and as saucy, the mouth had its old trick of petulant wilfulness. She was well dressed, very well dressed; not in black, as I remember I first saw her, but this time in white; dainty and gauzy in floating white grenadine, or some similar stuff, with laces and laces, and a broad brimmed round hat with a wavy, curling, jaunty white feather. She took off the hat as she came in and shook down her black tresses, with the same action of long ago.

"Ernestine!" Mrs. Bowdoin repeated. "How do you do?"

She returned the question, with a certain demure grace she can assume. Mrs. Bowdoin answered, somewhat in detail. Meanwhile the black eyes came over to me and surveyed me; I felt it without meeting them. Then she said softly,

"Miss Burgoyne does not recollect me."

"Do you recollect *me?*" I asked smiling.

"Why shouldn't I? I have not lost my memory."

"But ten years—eleven years—"

"O don't tell me about ten years! You are not changed a hair."

"Desire is too young for her hair to be changed," Mrs. Bowdoin said laughing.

"I don't mean that. You are very slow this morning, Mrs. Bowdoin! I mean, she is not a bit, not the least bit, altered since the last time I met her."

"*I* think she is altered, for the better," Mrs. Bowdoin returned. "I think she is grown handsomer than she was then. She is a little thin, perhaps."

"Why should she be handsomer?" was the instant retort, so quickly and so coolly given that Mrs. Bowdoin and I could neither of us help laughing.

"I mean," went on the lady, "what is there in ten years to make a person grow better looking? Am I changed?"

Mrs. Bowdoin did not answer, and she turned to me.

"Would you have known me again, Miss Burgoyne?"

"Certainly!"

"I don't seem to you altered?"

"You seem to me very much like your old self as I used to know you."

"But altered? Do you think I am altered? Answer!"

"Perhaps a little. But it is not the years, I think."

"How am I altered?" she said eagerly. "And what do you think it is that has altered me, if it is not the years? Speak, and tell me. *How* am I changed?"

"There is a little difference in the lines of your face—it is not easy to say just what it is. I should think it was not years, but"—I hesitated,—"want of rest."

There flew a second's shadow over her face; then she laughed, half scornfully, half bitterly.

"That is, I have married St. Ives," she said. "A woman gives up her peace when she marries; doesn't she, Mrs. Bowdoin? I put it off as long as I could; but I was afraid of putting it off *too* long, you know, and that won't do. Men are such plagues! they every one of them think they must always have their own way; and naturally I know the taste of that sweet pleasure myself, and so the battle begins. Don't you ever marry, Miss Burgoyne! unless you are prepared to fight for every individual step you take, and not always get it then. You are not afraid of being an old maid, are you?"

"I hope not," said Mrs. Bowdoin; who I saw did not like the lady's manner, and was willing to give the conversation a turn. "When was the last time you saw Desire, Ernestine?"

"She says it is ten years ago. O I know; I recollect. I was in Philadelphia, and you were staying with your sister; not Mrs. Birkenstall, but the other. How does Mr. Iredell get along without her?"

I was too astonished at this bold question to answer. Mrs. Bowdoin replied gravely,

"You know Mr. Iredell, and you know he would be always like himself."

"Yes, but I mean, was he terribly cut up?"

"I have not seen him," said Mrs. Bowdoin coldly, "Have you?"

"Yes, I have seen him," said Ernestine, "but that don't tell one anything. I talked to him too, and I tried to find out; but I might as well have flattered a Pyramid. He turned the tables on me, as he has a mean way of doing, and the first thing I knew, he was putting *me* through the catechism But by the way; what's he going abroad for?"

Mrs. Bowdoin exclaimed.

"You knew he was going? Didn't *you* know he was going, Miss Burgoyne?"

I replied that I had not known it.

"Well, there is some news for you. Yes, he is going. I know, for I asked him myself, and he said so. He is going to Egypt, he says. We know what that means, or at least what it looks like. Of course people will say he cannot get over his wife's death, and he is going to try a change. Dear me! I wish I could go too—and for the same reason!"

There was a wicked little laugh following these

words, which put a peculiar interpretation upon them. Mrs. Bowdoin passed that subject, and asked when Mr. Iredell expected to sail?

"Why now—soon—he may be in Boston any day; for he said he would go by the Cunard line, and he thought, about midsummer. You will see him here before you know it; for of course he will call on you, Mrs. Bowdoin. I am sorry, he won't call on me. I asked him, but he said he should be in Boston only a day or two."

"What is he going to Egypt for?"

"Ask him," said Ernestine. "I told you what people will say. Men go where they like, and for what they like. I wish women could. O dear Mrs. Bowdoin, haven't you often wished you were a man?"

"Never in my life!"

"They have a great deal the best time. I think it is just *horrid*, to have to ask somebody else when you want to do anything! Now a man is independent. Catch them asking their wives' leave about their plans!—or if they do it, you despise them; but we, poor creatures— What is the reason, Mrs. Bowdoin? Women are better than men; why should they have the worst time?"

"You would not like to change, and do a man's work, Ernestine."

"Wouldn't I?" she said, looking down at her gloves, which as usual were of the daintiest description. "Well, we do get our revenge a little, by making fools of the men. Only sometimes I

am tired of it. What is the consolation, after you have made fools of them?"

"You cannot do it with everybody."

"I can," she said instantly. "I do it. I have done it all my life. The only man I ever saw, that I couldn't make a fool of, is Maximilian Iredell; and that's why I like him more than I do any other man living."

"Ernestine!—your husband?"

"I don't except him," she said, laughing mischievously. "I do not indeed. I have made a fool of him a hundred thousand times, and I'll do it another hundred thousand. I would have married Mr. Iredell if I could have got him. How shocked Desire looks! but I dare say she would say the same. No, she wouldn't *say* it; there's the difference. Mrs. Bowdoin, is it any worse to say a thing than to think it? I insist it isn't; and that's why I speak out things as they come into my head. Mrs. Bowdoin! *is* it any worse?"

"It is not always as well-bred," Mrs. Bowdoin answered.

"O well! I meant that speech only in jest. And yet it is true, Mrs. Bowdoin, and you know it is true. *Any* woman would have married Max Iredell, that could have persuaded him to ask her; and you are only shocked at my saying it. You know I always do shock you."

"I think the difficulty lies further back," I said here. "I do not think Mr. Iredell would have asked any woman, who tried to persuade him to do it."

"You don't think he could be made a fool of," she said with a covert sneer. "Well, perhaps you know best. I said he was my one exception. Mrs. Bowdoin, have you quite got over all the effects of that horrid fever?"

"Not quite," said my friend. "One of the effects is, that I have got Desire here; and I mean to keep her."

"Till fall? How charming!"

"As long as I live. Desire is to be my child from this time and for ever."

"Really?"

"My child and heiress. I shall give her all I have got.

"Mercy, Mrs. Bowdoin! Not yet awhile, please?"

"I shall live awhile longer, I hope, to enjoy it with her, now that she has nursed me back into life; and she, I hope, to enjoy it with me."

"It is the largest nurse's fee I ever heard of being given! I may congratulate you, Miss Burgoyne? That is a great deal nicer than being married. You will have all you want, without needing to make a fool of anybody to get it."

She took leave soon after this. The words look very ugly as I have written them down; but as the pretty, spoiled, wilful, unhappy child of the world spoke them, they did not sound so ugly; the gay, mischievous air of head and lip partly nullified the effect of the more mischievous speech. Most of all, however, the impression made altogether was that the speaker was not happy. Poor child, I forgave

her easily; it was so easy to see that of all the sweets of her butterfly life, as she once called it, bitter and sour were the flavours left upon her tongue. Mrs. Bowdoin on the other hand was outraged. For half an hour she inveighed against Mrs. St. Ives, and declared that unless she shewed penitence she should never more be a guest at The Lilacs.

When I was alone, which did not happen till I went to my room at night, I sat down to do some thinking. Ever since Mrs. St. Ives quitted the house, I had been aware of a certain plan looming up before me which I must put in execution. I must go home to Chesterfield. For a time, at any rate, I must go home. And there are two reasons. In the first place, Mrs. Bowdoin is taking things for granted about my acceptance of her proposition. I am not clear yet as to what I ought to do. And I do not think I can be clear, till I go home and look at the question calmly from a Chesterfield point of view. Once there for a little while, and I think it would be shewn me what I must do.

So that is a reason for going at once. Yet it is not the reason that is driving me. And I am in a fever of haste to be gone. I am rather surprised at myself; but the fact is, I want to get away before Mr. Iredell comes. I do not want to see him. True, he has been nothing to me for a very long time, except—ah me! how much he has been to me nevertheless! Still it was only in my secret thought. Practically, he and I have been very far

apart; for long there has been not even the most superficial contact. What should his going abroad be to me? But the news of it touched me like a cold mist coming up and hiding the sunshine; and it seems to me I have not felt warm since. I cannot see him and bid good bye to him; there is no need I should; it will be nothing to miss, for him, and it will be something to escape, for me.

I am in the same room where I watched through that dreadful night twelve years ago. Was the work at that time not thoroughly done? the work of submission and relinquishing? Yes, I think so; and yet it is strange how much fire can live under so much ashes. Twelve years! and my heart is beating yet, and tears are welling into my eyes, and falling hot on my hands. I am not taking back anything I ever gave up, I am not even repining, I think; but memory is alive and pricks me with incessant pricks of pain; and I have an odd sort of pity for myself. Yes, Desire; you had better get home and get reasonable, as fast as possible.

Chesterfield, July 10.

I WAS afraid to say a word of my intention the next day, for fear Mrs. Bowdoin might connect things which I did not wish her to think of together. With my heart in my mouth, I waited over one day, trembling lest Mr. Iredell should in

the meanwhile come; but I dared do no other The second day I spoke. I told Mrs. Bowdoin that I must go home for a little, and must go at once; I told her I had reasons for wishing to be at Chesterfield immediately; I had something to do there. Which was eminently true, though she was far from dreaming what. I carried my point, and got away, two days ago.

I put off thinking till I got home. There I found some new material. Arethusa was laid up with a sort of intermittent fever, which keeps her in bed; and Mrs. Quick was quivering with the desire to take a journey as far as St. Albans, to be present at her son's wedding, who is settled there. She had been just about to summon Miss Polly Binninger to take her place and set her free to go. So I came at the right time; packed Mrs. Quick off, and fell naturally into my old position. I am alone in the house; but I do not care about that, for just now I want leisure to think, and I like to have no hindrance. To tell the truth, I could not do much thinking the first day, what with the house and Arethusa and getting Mrs. Quick off; and at night I was too tired to do anything but sleep. To day again I was fully engaged all the morning. Late in the afternoon, as Arethusa did not want me, I went out to the porch for a breath of air, and sat down in the doorway.

Hot summer all over the land; hot and breathless. Late roses are blossoming still; the sight and the smell of them came to me with its reminder.

That is nothing; they always remind me. Memory does not die. Does nothing die? For here I felt myself oppressed with a sudden feeling of loneliness, because—O because Mr. Iredell is going abroad. What is that to me? All this year and more I have not seen him nor heard from him; he is nothing to my life and has no concern in it, nor I in his. I know that. I never had. And yet, the news that he is going has brought a cloud over the whole sky for me; and I feel alone, with a sudden depressing sense of loneliness. I am like a traveller on a desolate track, who for a long while has taken a certain sort of pleasure in a far-off, vaguely seen, figure of another traveller; and now of a sudden that figure disappears and the road is empty. Full of people, and yet empty. How strange it is! Yet I put it wrong; each individual life-track is *not* full of people; it really touches, or is touched by, only a very few. This one has touched mine; and now that he goes out of sight, it is impossible to say how long and empty the life-track looks before me; how barren the sweet outlines of my Chesterfield hills. It is utterly unreasonable, utterly unreasonable! The intercourse between us, all these years; whenever there was any intercourse, gave no nourishment to any such feeling; except so far as in the necessary facts of the case it was nourished by the simple sight and hearing of him, and therefore I avoided the sight and hearing of him. Mr. Iredell was always like a kind brother to me, in consideration and care-

taking and protection; *that* never failed; but in manner I could not even call him brotherly. I always felt that to him I was Olive's sister, not his own. The liking he once had for me had been transferred; and the fact that it *could* be transferred proves that it must have been slight. I knew all this; had known it long; had accepted it, and was, I thought, content; and here now was I with a sore pang in my heart because he was going out of the country, and slow tears rising up to my eyes, and one after another breaking limits and rolling over. O Desire, Desire, what a child you are yet. And is not God good, who has turned your steps into a lonely way and denied you the companionship that would have made it a path of flowers, and bid you look to himself only? I know he is good! and I know he means it all to be good for me; and I do trust, and I do love him, and I am glad. And life—O I know, life is not pleasure, but "to do his will." I know it all; only just now I am foolish and cry. I know the path where he is with one is not lonely, will not be so, as step by step it comes to be travelled.

July 12.

CERTAINLY that little old French proverb is wise which says, "One day is like another, but one day is not the same as another." I thought of it yesterday.

I got up the next morning, that is, yesterday morning, I am bound to say with no perceptible amendment of the mood in which I had gone to bed. My heart felt heavy. The weather was of a sort to encourage no help of the animal spirits; still and hot and oppressive. I was very early up and went first to my patient. She was doing fairly, and craved a cup of tea. So I kindled my kitchen fire and put on the kettle; swept up, and got my dairy work done; for I had no butter on hand luckily today; then I made Arethusa's cup of tea and took it to her. It was very early still when that was done; and I thought I should like a cup of tea myself. But the house felt so close and so empty that I betook myself to the porch again, for air and for companionship. Out there I had Nature at least; and Nature is a good deal on a July morning. I carried a small table out to the porch, and arranged my cup and saucer and something to eat, and made my tea. While the tea was drawing I sat in the porch, for the four walls of the house were oppressive to me. And out of doors it was so lovely! All along the horizon on one side was the glow of the coming sun; he had not got over our mountains yet. All through the valley lay a warm mist, through which here and there where it parted I could see the bright round heads of the chestnut trees in flower, just indicated here and there under the veil of mist; I knew how they would look in two hours more. Close at hand my roses were fragrant; everything drenched in dew; and the warm

gold of the July atmosphere beginning to infuse itself through the fog and to redden the tops of the hills. But still and breathless all, as it was sweet. I sat looking, feeling the wonderful speech of nature, which I have felt often; and glad in the tokens of the exceeding riches of God's hand. Lonely, as I had been last night, and yet glad. What wealth of loveliness spread over the world! Look at the piling up of those hills, with their soft waving outlines; look at the chestnut trees in their glory, and the firs in the green steadfastness that belongs to them. See the colouring and the light, that no painter could ever paint; and then the heads of roses, heavy with dew and sending out their sweet breath. I dreamed over it all, in a kind of ecstasy of recognition, under which I nearly forgot my breakfast. Then, I suppose physical nature asserted her needs, I recollected and went to fetch my tea pot. I remember how, as I lifted it from the hearth, patience seemed to take up her burden and be ready to carry it. Yes, I said to myself, it shall be as the Lord will, and it will be good. He will shew me how to go. And with so much of peace coming back into my heart, I thought a cup of tea would be good. I had been now so long up, and I wanted it.

As I set the tea pot down on the table, I heard the little gate that opens on the road click, as it swung to. It was very early still, and I lifted my eyes quickly; for who could be coming? Nobody could be abroad yet, unless in the farmyards where

men were milking the cows. I thought I had Chesterfield valley all to myself. And there was Mr. Iredell, a few feet from me; for that little gate has but some yards of a garden plot between it and the house. Mr. Iredell, coming towards me with a half smile on his face, and carrying his hat in his hand. I cannot tell the sort of pang that went through me, of pleasure and pain at once; but I think, most of pain. O why could he not have spared me this! I thought; the leave-taking that I had fled away to escape! Must this last sharp edge be put upon my trouble, that patience may have her perfect work? And yet at the same time there ran a thrill of gladness through me, from my head to my feet. Between the two emotions, I think I stood very still, for a minute almost like a stone figure. Mr. Iredell came up and into the porch, and then of course we shook hands.

"At breakfast, at this time of day?" said he.

"I might better say, You here, at this time of day? How could you?"

"Be here? I did not want to go away without seeing you, Desire."

"Yes," said I, "I understand; but how could you get here at this hour? The last train comes to the station at six o'clock in the evening."

"It did not come at six o'clock last evening. We had delays. First waiting for the train going the other way, at Sutphen I think; and then we ran off the track, about an hour further on."

"Off the track! Any harm done?"

"Only to people's patience," said he smiling. "Mine suffered shipwreck."

"And when did you get to our station, then?"

"Near ten o'clock."

"And you slept there?"

"Naturally; there was nothing else to be done. But I found no attraction to keep me there after the morning broke. So I left my night's quarters a little more than an hour ago. I was afraid I should find nobody up, it was so early yet, and was looking at my watch only a few minutes back, to see what my reasonable prospects might be."

"You walked from the station?"

"Yes; I could not ask anybody to rouse himself and harness his horses for me at such an hour, just because I was impatient. And I thought walking would be pleasanter, and so I found it. Now would it be fair for me to ask a question or two in my turn?"

"Yes," said I, recollecting myself and smiling. "Won't you sit down? I am forgetting everything in my astonishment."

"You are well?" said he, sitting down and favouring me with a critical glance.

"Quite well," I said.

"You were very pale when I came," he went on, looking not perfectly satisfied. "The surprise has brought a little colour back now. You have been playing nurse a long time for Mrs. Bowdoin, she tells me?"

"Yes," said I; "and I am doing it still, for an-

other person. That is why I am out here so early, and alone. There is nobody else at present in the house, as it happens, of any sort; only this friend that lives with me, and has lived with me a long time, and is sick now. She has a sort of intermitting fever; not serious, but just enough to keep her in bed. I did not need to watch with her; but I went to her early this morning, and gave her her breakfast; and then I thought I would come out here for mine, the house was so warm."

"There is nobody else in the house, but you and this sick woman?"

"No," said I smiling. "*That* is nothing."

"Nobody but you to take care of her?"

"No. Who should there be? O I could have help if I wanted it."

"Your old trade!" said he.

The tone of the words went back, back; and suddenly silenced me. I cannot tell what was in the tone, there were so many things; recollection was only one of them. It made my heart beat, somehow. We were both silent. Then Mr. Iredell spoke again, in a lower voice and slowly.

"Desire—did Olive tell you what she told me, the last night but one that she lived?"

I was unboundedly startled, for not only the question but also the manner in which it was put were peculiar. I looked, almost in affright, at Mr. Iredell's face to see what it meant. What was in his face I cannot say, and I would not if I could; it seems to me there was everything in it; but one

thing, I saw, was a clear recognition of the whole matter. He knew the whole. Did he know me too. How could he? But he had risen, and stretched out his arms, and I—O Niagara might as well refuse her leap!—I came into them. And then I was at home. A still, blissful sense of having *got home* came over me; as far as earthly things are concerned, this was my home; my due, fit, proper place, where I belonged. We were both very still, standing motionless, while on one hand the suddenness almost took away my breath, and on the other, with some of those queer cross currents which come over the tides of emotion, I could have burst into a storm of tears. But I would not, and I did not; there was too much of answering feeling in the clasp of the arms that were around me. In fact, what it said was by degrees more than I could bear, and I gently made a movement to release myself. But I was not released, and the movement had only the effect to bring my face into view, which let Mr. Iredell see, I suppose, that my eyelashes were wet. He asked me, in a whisper, what I was crying for?

"I might say, tears of joy," I answered, brushing my hand over my rebellious eyes hastily, —"only, I do not believe there are any such tears."

"What are these for, then?" said he quickly.

Ah, I could not tell him. My voice was rebellious now and refused me. I knew they were for all the days of all the years that had rolled over us

since we first knew each other, and for that which had made them what they were; for the pitifulness and the needlessness of it. There came a great nervous sob in my throat, and I hid my face. And quick as lightning, and as uncalled for, came another thought. When had Mr. Iredell begun to like me again? and was it in consequence of Olive's revelation? I did not doubt the liking nor question its quality at all; his look had been enough; but this impertinent thought came up in spite of all that. The sort of gentle, close strain in which his arms held me was answering that thought all the while, and I believe would gradually have banished it; but then words came to help. I heard two words, just "My Desire!"—spoken in such a tone of absolute finished content, that it nearly ended all my possible power of self-command. I struggled with myself and raised my head.

"When—?" I began, and I could not get out another word.

"When did I begin to think so?" said Mr. Iredell. "At the very first. I loved you at the beginning, Desire; I have loved you always, from that time. I have loved nobody else but you."

"Then—how—?" I tried again, and could not speak my question; but I suppose my surprised eyes finished it.

"Yes," he said, "you may ask. It was one of my mistakes, for I knew afterwards that it had been a mistake. I thought two negatives perhaps might make an affirmative. I could not have you,

and I knew that I never should love anybody else. Then—I knew that Olive loved me."

I was looking at him now, and one of his hands was laid to the side of my face, in the way one does to a child, while his eyes were looking at me in a way it was extremely difficult to bear and keep my composure.

"Do you remember our talk about the legend of the two Swiss dancers, the night we were sitting by the river at the garden party? and do you recollect what you said about constancy, and living for the happiness of—not oneself, but—the loved one?"

I said yes, catching my breath.

"Well, I acted on that principle. I could not have you. Then what did it matter? If I married Olive, I could at least be near you and watch over you and take care of you. Olive would be happy; I loved her well enough to make her so; and I could, I thought, guard in some measure your happiness. Mine did not, otherwise, come into consideration."

I did not see the relevancy of what followed, for it pleased Mr. Iredell to seal this speech, or end it, with a sudden, long meeting of his lips with mine. It said so much, and by implication made me say so much, that it left me all confused; and I felt my face flushing to the roots of my hair. But Mr Iredell smiled.

"And you, Desire?—" he asked.

"What?" said I hastily.

"All this time—what has been your thought of me?"

"My thought of you—has been always the same," I said.

"What was it?"

I looked at him, and laughed a little at the question at first, and then felt the blood rushing into my face again, worse than at first.

"Haven't I a right to know?" said he. "It is a question which has given me a great deal of anxiety, Desire!"

"I have not changed, Mr. Iredell,—" I said at last.

"That may mean something good," said he; "but is hardly satisfactory unless I know what the state of the case was at first, which has not changed."

"What—O I cannot tell you!" I said between laughing and crying; "it is unreasonable! I will try to shew you, as time goes on." And I felt my lips quivering miserably, but on Mr. Iredell's lips there was a smile the like of which I had never seen there before, it was so glad and merry. I made an effort to get upon safer ground.

"I never guessed, Mr. Iredell, all these years, that you cared for me,—more than just for *her* sister."

"I was bound not to care," said he. "Do you remember ten years, eleven years, ago? I went to Florida then because I found I could not bear it, to live in the same house with you. And I would not deprive Olive of the comfort of your presence."

I was profoundly silent, remembering how I had come home as soon as I knew that his return was looked for, because I found that *I* could not endure the daily intercourse; the pleasure of it was growing too great, and the pain of it becoming unbearable.

"What brought you to Chesterfield just now?" Mr. Iredell asked, as if he had read my thoughts. I believe I started.

"Did you know that I was coming to Boston?"

"Yes—I heard you were.—Mrs. St. Ives—"

"Then what did you go away for, Desire?"

I hesitated, and confessed I did not want to say good bye to him.

"Why not? Wouldn't it have been civility?"

There was again that slight, merry smile of full content upon Mr. Iredell's lips. What was the use of hiding? It seems to me I acted quite unlike myself, but perhaps I did not; for I forgot all shyness, and everything but the past loneliness and the present rest of my heart, and just turned and put up my arms around his neck and laid my head down. And then I think Mr. Iredell was content, and I know I was.

Silence can be as eloquent—more eloquent—of meaning, it seems to me, than any words; and in such a full silence we stood awhile. But when I found kisses beginning to give to some things at least a more vivid expression, I started back into a great fit of shamefacedness and shrank away. I was released, and stood a moment looking into the

warm July light, wondering if the years had rolled back with me or rolled forward, everything was so transformed; and yet, the summer morning was hardly half an hour advanced on its way since Mr. Iredell entered the courtyard gate and came up the path there. My eye fell on my table, and the tea pot, grown cold; and glad of a diversion, I seized the tea pot and was hastening into the house. But Mr. Iredell caught my other hand and held it.

"Where are you going?" he demanded.

"To get you some breakfast."

"I do not want it. I do not want anything!

"But you *must*," said I, half laughing, and with that terrible shamefacedness upon me. "You have walked four miles already this morning; and I—I have been up since three o'clock. People must eat."

"How come you to have been up since three o'clock?"

"I came down to look after a sick friend I have in the house. I told you."

"True; I believe you did, and I was thinking of something else. What are you going to do now?"

"Get you a cup of tea."

"I don't want it, Desire."

"But I do, Mr. Iredell."

"That alters the case," said he laughing. "May I come too?"

I could not forbid him, although in the excitement and revolution of my spirits I could have welcomed a moment to be alone and get, as it

were, hold of myself. However, Mr. Iredell followed me into the kitchen, where he promptly seized the tongs and put the neglected fire together. The piece of furniture he was handling was to be sure a heavy iron pair of tongs, such as do duty in farmers' kitchens. Mr. Iredell looked at it as he put it down.

"Is this what you have been accustomed to handle?" said he.

I said yes, of course; and then caught a glance and half smile which came from the tongs to me, that drove the blood into my face. As if my heart was not beating wildly enough already. For the look said I had done with that sort of thing. Well, I watched till the kettle should boil again, trying to think what I could give my visiter for breakfast. Eggs? yes, I had eggs; and yesterday I had gone into the garden for a few minutes and picked a bowl full of the yellow raspberries just now in perfection. They were too beautiful to be allowed to decay and fall; and so I had taken a few minutes, busy as I was, to pick them. I had not guessed for whom.

I made fresh tea, Mr. Iredell watching me, and lifting the kettle for me. As I put the pot down, I heard a faint, imperative cry of "Desire"—"Desire"—from the inner room. Arethusa inhabited the one which used to be grandma's. I ran in to see what she wanted.

"Desire," said she, "what's out there? I thought I heard a step in the kitchen."

"You might have heard mine."

"Nobody ever hears your steps. No, I thought it was a man's step."

"Very likely. There was such a creature in the kitchen."

"What's he doing there?"

"Well, it was somebody that wanted to see me," said I, arranging her pillows and biting my lips; for I was in that sort of agitation of the spirits which makes one laugh or cry easily.

"Who is it, Desire?"

"Now, Arethusa," said I judicially, "I am not going to have you concerning yourself with any sort of business till you are quit of this fever. Shut your eyes and go to sleep; and pay no attention to any steps you hear. Do you want anything?"

She wanted nothing, she said; and I saw her close her eyes in good truth and settle herself to sleep. I rushed off to my dairy; fetched the eggs and the cream and the raspberries; poured the fruit into a more respectable dish; boiled the eggs; and in a little while carried my breakfast out to the porch, whither Mr. Iredell had again betaken himself. I suppose he went in kindness to give me a chance. And then we sat down, not to our first breakfast together, and yet it seemed the first.

I doubt there does not often come into a human life such a lull and peace as came into mine now. Perhaps there cannot, without the storm and the struggle going before. Perhaps nobody can know

rest but those who have been tired; and no doubt the full witchery of the word "home" is best understood by one who has been wandering in a desert alone. I do not mean, of course, that it has been storm and struggle with me all these years; and I have been most of the time happy, not unhappy; more happy, I think, than almost anybody I know. But I went through the storm, different times, and it left me tired; and—yes—for long, the world has been more or less a wilderness to my feet. I had never expected it to be anything else as long as I lived; and I was content; only just these last few days there had come a fit of loneliness over me. And now,—it seemed as if a spell of peace had settled down upon my head. I hardly dared look full at Mr. Iredell; the side-vision gave me as much as I could bear. The little ordinary courtesies of the table had almost the grace of consecration. As for eating and drinking, I swallowed tea and bread without knowing how they tasted; I swallowed them from the instinctive sense of need. And the July morning was all around us, in its stillness and sweetness; the scent of the roses still dewy, while the mist was lifting and the bright heads of the chestnut trees were coming out into fuller and fuller view along the valley. It was yet so early that people had not finished their breakfast and got out to work; so there was no fear of any eyes but our own. Mr. Iredell talked, but about trifling matters; told me about the accident the night before, and his quarters at the station

house, and his pretty walk up the valley in the early day. Then we remarked that the day was going to be very hot. Next, Mr. Iredell asked me who our minister was?

I said, his name was Macartney.

"What sort of a man is he?"

"He is—quite a clever man," said I, wondering a little how it should be a matter of interest to my questioner. "A good deal of a scholar. His wife is a *very* nice woman."

"I must make acquaintance with him," said Mr. Iredell. "Where does he live?"

"He lives close by the church," I said. "But I hardly think you would find much pleasure in him."

"I am afraid he would not find much pleasure in me," said Mr. Iredell; then with a change of tone —"Desire, do you tell me you are alone in the house?"

"Yes; only this sick woman."

"Is she seriously ill?"

"O no; she is getting better."

"And is there nobody but you to do anything?"

"O yes," said I smiling, "I have help. My good neighbour, Miss Polly Binninger, will come over as soon as she gets her own little household matters out of the way. And there she is coming this moment!"

Mr. Iredell looked towards the road, where an approaching sunbonnet could be seen moving along by the fence and just appearing above it; and then he turned to me with a smile which recognized the

interruption to our talk and submitted to it, but with also such a look of love in the eyes that said there was a great deal to talk about, that I was for a minute dazed and stupefied; and I said nothing at all to Miss Polly as she turned in at the gate and came up the steps. She however gave Mr. Iredell a condescending, "How do you do, sir?" as she passed him where he stood drawn back to let her go by. I followed her into the house, and the minute she got in she turned to me.

"Who's that, Desire?"

"A gentleman that wanted to see me, Miss Polly. Isn't it going to be hot to-day?"

"What's he after?" said Miss Polly, without the smallest regard to my interpolation about the weather.

"He came to see me," said I. "He had some business to speak about."

"O la!" said Miss Polly, "what's the use o'—talkin'? Don't I know what business he come on? I see it, the first minute I clapped my eyes on him. There she goes!—I says to myself. O Desire, is it true? Be you goin' sure enough?"

I laughed at Miss Polly, a little hysterically, I am afraid; and she stood and looked at me, with her sunbonnet in her hand.

"Wall, wall!" said she;—"wall, wall! Is it so? I'd rather ha' ben took down with a fit o' sickness,—or lost my cow—or—"

"Don't Miss Polly!" said I; "you must not say that. He is the friend that bought you your cow."

"You give her to me yourself," said Miss Polly.

"Yes, but I told you she wasn't bought with my money. The money was given me by a friend; and this is the friend. He sent it to me through my sister, to do pleasant things with."

"Who is he then?" said Miss Polly. And I told her.

"Wall," said she again, "he's a goin' to do the wust turn for Chesterfield that anybody's done yet. I thought the factory was pretty bad, down at the other end, for it brought sich a lot o' mise'able folks along; but la! this man's goin' to take away more'n ever t'other man fetched! When be you goin'?" she asked suddenly.

I answered in a very quiet manner, that I did not know; at the same time my heart made two or three jumps, for the question started several others. Was Mr. Iredell indeed going abroad? and when? and what would he perhaps want me to do? However, I put down these thoughts under lock and key, as things with which for the present I had no concern; and went on to practical matters.

"Miss Polly," I said, "there is nothing whatever in the house for dinner."

Miss Polly meditated a moment.

"Guess likely; things ain't jes' in the same order when you ain't to hum, Desire. Mis' Quick's a kind o' easy soul. I'll tell you what we'll do—ef you kin spare me to run hum for an hour or so—I've some nice spring chickens, jes' right for br'ilin';

I'll run hum and kill a couple of 'em; and you kin have 'em anyhow you like; but there's nothin' suits *me* better'n a br'iled chicken and a good cup o tea, in a hot day."

"And I think there are some peas in the garden," said I.

"An' Deacon Parsons has some elegant new potatoes—I'll jes' stop as I come along and borrow a mess of 'em."

I knew she would pay for the potatoes in news; but what use to try to help that? it would be all over Chesterfield in an hour or two. So she went in to see Arethusa, and I went back to the porch. Mr. Iredell rose up to give me a seat, but I told him I had business to attend to, and must run away for a while.

"Business?" said he. "Would it be a very indiscreet question, if I asked what you are going to do?"

I told him, pick some peas for dinner.

"Peas for dinner!" he repeated. "Who is coming?"

"Why, nobody," said I laughing.

"Then, if nobody is coming, it seems to me we can do without the peas. I do not want any. Do you?"

"Not for myself"—I confessed.

"Then—suppose you sit down for a minute or two."

I sat down, and he took place beside me and went on immediately, in the coolest, quietest, most

matter-of-course way, to put a question which took away my breath. Yet I cannot say it was wholly unexpected.

"Desire, how much time do you want to get ready?"

"Ready?" I gasped. "Ready, for—?"

"Egypt," said he with a smile.

"Egypt!" I repeated.

"Would you like to spend the winter in Egypt? And come home by the way of Jerusalem in the spring?"

"Oh!—" said I with a half drawn breath. "But I do not think I care—much—where I spend the winter."

"Nor I," said he, with a smile that was of deeper gladness this time. "But there are certain interests, which I think it would be good for me to go to Syria to examine into; I think I ought to go; and for you—my Desire!—it would be the best thing possible."

"It would take me some time to be ready for Egypt," I said. "I have nothing prepared for such a journey."

"All *that* can be done in three days; in New York and Philadelphia and Boston. We will get what you want as we pass through. The immediate question is, how soon can you be ready to leave Chesterfield?"

I was silent. I had not unpacked my trunk yet. There it stood, as ready to go as it had been to come.

"Are there any visits you wish to make?"

"No," said I slowly. "If I went to one, I must to so many—and I do not like such visits."

"Is there anything else you wish to wait for?"

I paused again, but finally said "No."

"Then I propose to make the acquaintance of your minister, and arrange with him for to-morrow morning early; say eight o'clock; then we will drive straight on to the station and take the ten o'clock train for Boston."

I was silent.

"What do you say?" said he gently. "Would you prefer to go to Boston first, and be married from Mrs. Bowdoin's house?"

"Oh no!" I said. "Oh no!"

"We want all our time in Europe now, for I mean to take you first to the south of France and from there overland to Rome, before we sail for Egypt. So the sooner we are off the better. But would you mind making the journey first to Philadelphia, just to let my mother see you?"

"Mind?" I repeated. "I should be so delighted to see her again!"

So it was arranged; and I could think of no way that I would have liked it better.

We had no peas for dinner. Good Miss Polly would have picked them herself, but she thought I had done it, until it was too late to mend matters. She had the intense delight of dining with us. I knew it would be a feather in her cap that would never cease to flourish; and I was amused

at one or two little satisfied nods of her head that I got after dinner. We had arranged, at least I had, at Mr. Iredell's suggestion and upon his authority, that Miss Polly should represent me in the house until Mrs. Quick's return; at a rate of payment which would, I knew, make my going away rather a blessed thing for the old lady. Arethusa had not been told of anything, and I forbade that she should, until I was gone.

Evening came, sultry, warm and still, as the day had been. I had done what I had to do, and was sitting in the porch when Mr. Iredell came back from his visit to Mr. Macartney. Miss Polly had gone home to shut up her house. The sun had set; the west was covered with a warm hazy glow; the line of hills was dark and growing darker; overhead a star here and there was faintly peeping out. The chirruping of insects was very busy; locusts and crickets and grasshoppers and katydids were having a good time; otherwise the deepest silence rested upon the Chesterfield world. Mr. Iredell's step returning was the only one heard, and the only notification of human presence in the neighbourhood. He came in and took a seat in the porch beside me.

"I find I am regarded in the light of anything but a benefactor to Chesterfield—" he began.

"Chesterfield has been accustomed to me now for a good while," I said.

"And those are the hills which you used to say 'shut you in,' like the Happy Valley of Rasselas,"

Mr. Iredell went on after a pause. "How has life been here all these years, my Desire?"

I hesitated now.

"Different, of course, at different times," I said. "But I remembered a word you once said to me, years ago,—that 'life is, to do the will of God'; and you know, that makes a sweet kind of a life."

"Doesn't it!" said he, stretching out his hand and taking mine into its clasp. "If the world knew! —Desire, have you all ready?"

"Yes," said I; "there was neither much to take nor much to leave. You do not understand the simplicity of such household arrangements, Mr. Iredell. There is only one thing I should like to have go with me,—one little packing case; I should feel as if it were safer at Philadelphia than here. Would it be much trouble?"

"What a question!" said Mr. Iredell. "You can do what you like, and have what you like, Desire. What is it?"

"It is my St. Cecilia," said I softly. "Do you recollect giving it to me?"

"I remember," said he gravely; "and I remember I thought you did not care for it."

"Care for it!" said I; "I cared so much—It was because—"

"I know!" said he, clasping my hand closer; and then we were both silent, for his tone stopped me. After a little he began again.

"There ought to be no secrets between us, Desire, and those there are not; but there ought to be

further no shadow of doubt or question on anything in the past. Once for all we must speak of it; and now is a good time. Then it may sleep."

"There is no doubt or question, I think, in my mind," I said tremulously.

"Are you satisfied with me and my action?"

"Why, certainly!" said I more steadily.

"I am not satisfied with myself," he returned. "I made a mistake, which a man is a fool to make. But I was utterly misled. I ought to have rested with nothing short of my answer from your own mouth."

I said nothing.

"I was made to believe that in your girlish simplicity, which indeed I knew and loved, you had never thought of me except as a kindly acquaintance; and that any direct application to yourself would only serve to frighten and distress you. I thought your sister must know—and I believed her."

"I know"—I whispered.

"What was the truth?"

"Not that," I said. "Yes, indeed, it is true that I had never thought—I mean, I had not dreamed that *you* thought—I did not think anything! until your letter came; your letter to me, that first letter; and I did not think anything then, till Olive's words made me."

"And then—? she answered it. How was that?"

"Because I was young and foolish—over persuaded, and shy. There was my mistake."

"What did you think of me, when you heard how things were going?"

"I thought I had been mistaken, or that you had transferred your regard," I said faintly.

"And you took it—how?"

I hesitated some time, and then whispered,

"I cannot tell you."

Mr. Iredell was silent now, again for some time. I guessed it was with pain; but I could not find a word to say.

"Do you forgive me, Desire?" were his next words.

"O hush, Mr. Iredell!" I said. "Do not speak so."

"What did you think of me?"

"I did not think anything of you. I mean,—I don't mean *that*, for I did think of you, of course, a great deal; only—I mean, I thought no harm, nothing wrong, of you; never! You know I had not the slightest reason to think you liked me, until that letter you wrote; and I should not have known what that meant, if—if Olive had not made me think of it."

Mr. Iredell carried my hand to his lips and kissed it; kisses of love and pain to which for a while he gave no other expression.

"You understand now," said he. "You know that to-morrow will but put you in your own place; which never by right belonged to another."

"But, Mr. Iredell," said I, wishing very much to soften the effect of what I had said,—"you remem-

ber the words: 'all things work together for good to them that love God' I guess—I have learned lessons. And I almost think that nobody could feel the sort of happiness I have now, that had not been through—something else, first."

Mr. Iredell folded me in his arms.

"Do you know," said he, "my mother will be greatly astonished if I let you speak to me in a manner of such formality?"

I knew he had let Olive. I knew she never, to his face, called him anything but "Mr. Iredell." I had thought perhaps he liked it. I saw that he did not like it with me.

I thought it all over after I had gone up to my room; for at first my brain and heart were too full to let me go to sleep. I lay awake, thinking. The night was hot and still, without a moon, faintly gleaming with stars which looked forth from behind a veil of vapour; a very July night. My last as Desire Burgoyne in Chesterfield! I went over again what I had said to Mr. Iredell; questioning whether the deep, full peace of gladness which possessed me could be known by anybody except one who had been called to give up his own will, and had done it. My happiness was not something I had striven and fought and grappled for; I had resigned it; and now it came in upon me like the mighty, quiet rise of the tide, swelling wave after wave, and inch by inch taking possession of the deserted shore. I was not in a tumult of passion, but in an incredible joy, which could not have been

what it was, I am persuaded, if the years of my solitary life had been less calm and sweet. It was no storm, but that mighty incoming tide, that I felt. With this feeling mingled another; the tenderest, pitifulest, sorrow for Olive. I have had that strong upon me before; but never so strong or so pitiful as to-night, when I could better measure what she had lost. In all my own happiness, this feeling brought the tears again and again welling up to my eyes, and my pillow was wet with them before I slept. There was one question I wanted yet to ask Mr. Iredell; I had not got it out this evening; I would watch my opportunity for it.

My sleep was as sweet, when it came, as my waking had been; so deep that I never heard a brief thunder-storm which towards morning rolled over the valley. When I opened my eyes the sky was blue and the birds were singing, and rain drops were glistening on the leaves and falling with every quiver of them. The sun was not up yet. I ran down stairs hastily and put various things in order for breakfast; gathered some water cresses from the meadow, and raspberries cool with the rain from the garden; skimmed the cream for the last time, and set the table. Miss Polly was astir, and nodded to me to trust her; she would have everything else ready; and I ran up stairs again to put myself in order. I had a clean linen travelling dress, which with my white ruffles looked very nice, and met all the necessities of the case. My bonnet was as plain as the rest of me, but I thought Mr. Iredell

would not dislike it; and I went down stairs contented. As I stepped out into the porch, Mr. Iredell met me, bringing me a rose.

"Are you all ready?" said he, touching the rose first to one of my cheeks and then to the other; a movement suggested, I suppose, by some similarity of hue at the moment.

"Quite ready, and so is breakfast."

"What do you suppose Mrs. Bowdoin will say to you, for stealing a march upon her?"

"I cannot tell. I must write to her."

"We will write from New York."

The breakfast was rather silent; Miss Polly being speechless, and the other two probably preoccupied. Then the wagon drove up; I ran in to take leave of Arethusa, who was fast asleep, and so she and I missed that; I put on my bonnet, kissed Miss Polly, who was now speechless for another reason, and in another minute I had left my old home.

It was going to be another hot day; but for the present the weather had all the possible loveliness of a summer morning; fresh, dewy, scented, vapourous, every stir of the light breeze shaking down rain drops left from last night. I noted and tasted every variety of the loveliness, in the acute way one does at times of peculiar interest or excitement. Not that I felt excited, though perhaps I was, without knowing it. The drive to the parsonage lasted a few minutes only. I marched in, preceding Mr. Iredell.

They were all ready for us there, and all un-

ready. I saw that at a glance, and knew it before I saw it. Mrs. Macartney pressed my hand silently, just keeping herself from bursting into tears. Her husband looked at me severely. The room was in particular order; the children waiting in their best dresses; even a dish of flowers was on the table; a very festive sign indeed. But the people it must be confessed did not look festive.

"Is it true, Desire," Mr. Macartney began solemnly,—"is it possible you are going to forsake us? to forsake Chesterfield?"

I saw a little lurking smile on Mr. Iredell's face, and was at my wits' end what to say.

"She can't help it, Mr. Macartney," said his wife. "You needn't scold. Women can't help these things."

"But I think her place is *here*," persisted the minister. "What is the Sunday school to do without her? or the Teachers' meeting? or the Sewing circle? or Chesterfield generally, in fact? When a human being has found his place—or her place—"

"Desire is just finding her place, my dear," put in his wife."

"I don't believe it," he returned stiffly. "She will never find a place where she will be more useful, or more welcome, than she is here. I regard it as a public calamity, what I have to do now!"

This was an experience! Mr. Iredell stood by, perfectly quiet, and I knew intensely amused; he did not give me any help. Poor Mrs. Macartney would, but truly her voice almost failed her. And

I, for my part, was so much in sympathy with the ludicrous side of the question, that I was afraid to trust mine for the very opposite reason. But indeed I wished the scene at an end and myself well out of the parsonage. Then Mr. Iredell looked at his watch.

"In the case of a public calamity," said he, "the best to be hoped for is that it should as soon as possible become a thing of the past. As I regard this one as inevitable,—perhaps Mr. Macartney will be so good as to let it pass—"

There was no gainsaying this request, and Mr. Macartney proceeded to his task; rather grimly however; and Mrs. Macartney's tears burst forth in real earnest. She kept wiping them away while the words were spoken; the few words which do such a great work; but then, after the minister had given a frigid touch of his lips to my forehead, she wrapped me in her arms with genuine sobs. I was thankful to Mr. Iredell for rescuing me. The children had still to be kissed even then.

"We told nobody, Desire," Mr. Macartney said, "because we understood that you wished it so. I expect people will be very angry with us. You would have had the whole town here, early as it is."

What would have become of me, I thought! if it was so hard to say good bye to only two. However, I thought the minister's face looked very considerably brighter after the "public calamity" than before; and I also guessed what the reason might be.

Just as I was leaving the room, Mrs. Macartney overcame her tears and started forward. "She has got no bouquet!" she exclaimed. "A bride without a bouquet! that will never do. Wait, Desire, wait—it is all I can do for you—"

And she took the large bunch of roses and honeysuckles which stood in the dish on the table, and hastily wrapping the wet ends of the stalks in a piece of white paper, presented it to me. I received it—there was no help for it,—Mr. Iredell put me and the flowers into the wagon, and at last we drove off.

"A bride with a bouquet!" I must be very unlike other brides, if that is their notion of the desirable; for me, what I wanted was to get rid of mine. How to do it? Luckily the drive to the station was long, a good four miles. I must be guilty of nothing which could be observed and carried back for a piece of news to Chesterfield; so caution was necessary. One by one I dropped a rose over the wagon side as we drove along, or cast a head of honeysuckle into the hedge rows when nobody was looking. One by one my great bouquet lessened and vanished away; so that when I got to the station I was as like simple Desire Burgoyne, in her travelling dress and old straw bonnet, going back to attend on Mrs. Bowdoin, as ever I could be; with no distinguishing mark about me at all. Except,—what to be sure distinguished me mightily in my own eyes,—the presence beside me, and the watchful, thoughtful care which he

bestowed upon all my movements. I had seen Mr. Iredell take care of Olive; I knew how he could do it; but I had never felt the like myself, unless just a touch of it in the old, old time; and this was still different. This was very unlike what Desire Burgoyne had ever been used to, so long accustomed to depend on myself and take care of myself as I had been, and never expecting anything else. It filled my heart with an unspeakable feeling of gladness and thankfulness; it made that day's long ride in the cars a going over enchanted ground, or through a blessed dreamland; only I knew it was no dream, and that the enchantment was a sober and lasting reality. I suppose any outsider would have said we were both very sober; I think we were too happy to be anything else; and the cars made too much of a rattle for us to talk a great deal. I was not sorry even for that. A word now and then, or a look, gave me as much as I could stand.

New York, July 15.

THE next day, going on to New York, we had a drawing-room car, were in quiet and by ourselves; and the day was a long delight of talk, about work doing and work done and work to do, together with plans for our European journey. I expected that Mr. Iredell would press on to Philadelphia that same afternoon; but instead of that

he took me to one of the large hotels, bespoke a pleasant sitting room, and proposed to me to get rid of travelling dust and have dinner. I liked what he liked; and besides, such an establishment as this hotel is a new experience to me and amusing. I had not much choice in the matter of dresses; a white muslin was the most respectable thing I could find, and I put on that. As I came out, Mr. Iredell met me with a beautiful rose which he must have been out to some neighbouring greenhouse to get, and fastened it himself in my dress. Then his eyes met mine and he smiled. I saw in the smile the answer to a question I would have liked to put; I knew he was contented with my appearance. That made me contented, and so we went down to dinner.

The dinner was an entertainment to me. In an enormous hall or dining room, lofty and cool and very handsome, we had a little table to ourselves. Other people were dining at other little tables. It was a novel strange scene. The dinner served was excellent, and Mr. Iredell fell into a vein of quiet talk, after his usual fashion, which gave my ears even more to do than my eyes found. We were far enough from other diners to be utterly free and unconstrained. It was all better than a play; even if I had not been so happy as I was.

When we came back to our sitting room, Mr. Iredell put me in a chair just in front of the open window, from which the breeze was now flowing

in refreshingly from the sea; and standing there, asked me if I would not like to send wedding presents to my friends at Chesterfield?

"Presents!" I echoed, and my heart jumped. "But, Mr. Iredell, my friends in Chesterfield are numerous."

"Well?"

"It would be difficult, you know, to send presents to some, without the others feeling slighted."

"What then?" said he, sitting down beside me and looking very unmoved. "I am not proposing to you to slight anybody. What do you think of a black silk for that nice, quiet minister's wife, who was so sorry to have you go away?"

"Mrs. Macartney!" I exclaimed, fairly out of breath with delight. "But, Max—"

"Well?" said he, taking one of my hands.

"There are a *great many* of my friends in Chesterfield. And if you began with a black silk to Mrs. Macartney—there must be a proportion in things, you know?"

"I know. And I am not going to begin anything. You are to do it. And I do not see the difficulty yet."

My thoughts flew, and my pulses beat. I could think in a minute of ever so many people to whom this or that particular thing would be a great, hitherto unattainable boon. But—there were so many of them!

"There is all my Sunday school class," I went on. "That is not so much; they are young. But

there is all the Teachers' meeting; and then there are friends and friends!—"

Mr. Iredell began to laugh at me.

"Begin and tell me the names," said he, taking his note-book from his pocket. "We will get the names together, and then we will see what shall stand opposite to each name. And *then*, we shall know what we have got to do. Item. 'Mrs. Macartney—black silk.' Will that do?"

"O yes! But—but—Max, it will take a great deal of money."

"I think not. But suppose it."

"Is it right, to spend so much for such a reason?"

"Yes. The reasons for spending money are, to do good or to get good. I think the present case falls under the first head."

"It would give a great deal of pleasure—" I said doubtfully.

"That is one of the ways of doing good," said Mr. Iredell smiling. "Don't you see, it will be useful that your friends at Chesterfield should know you have not forgotten them? and they must have tangible proof of it. It is right to comfort them up a bit, too, for the loss of you; and I think all the influence of your past life among them will be heightened and established by this remembrance of them now. So go on, and let us have the names. It is no virtue in me to give money, Desire; all my life it has been, that where I laid down one dollar for the Lord's service, he gave me two. Ask yourself only

the question, what in each case would give the most lasting benefit and pleasure. Now let us see."

What an evening's work that was! what a time of delight unmixed and unalloyed! I knew, taking the names one by one, I knew what would just meet a long-felt want here, or supply an undreamed-of delectation there. Mr. Iredell took every scruple from me at last, and we made up our list royally. Mrs. Macartney's black silk led off; and there was a large Bagster's Bible, with references, for Deacon Parsons; and Hugh Miller's writings for Mr. Chandler; and Taylor Lewis's works for Mr. Binnacle; while to their wives went dress patterns and caps and shawls. Here a work-box, fitted up; there a writing-desk ditto. To all the Teachers' meeting people, Bagster's Bibles of the octavo edition. An edition I knew only by Mr. Iredell's own, which I had seen long ago in the library in Poulteney Place once or twice; indeed it was there also, in Olive's room, that I had seen and studied the larger edition, which I destined for Deacon Parsons. Then there were poorer houses, where the gifts were a little different. A carpet in one; a tea-service in another; and for one poor man who had lost his horse, and could not, I knew, afford to replace the loss, I laughingly confessed that I wanted some old Dobbin or other. Mr. Iredell's lips took a certain set at that, and the entry went down in his note-book, I thought, with significant energy. Ah what an evening we had!

For indeed it took the evening; there was so much to discuss.

"When are we going to do all this?" I asked with a sudden wondering scruple, after we had got through.

"To-morrow."

"Can we do it in one day?"

"I think so. If you know what you want, and know where to get it, there is no need to be long about such business—unless you are an undecided character. What do you think you want for yourself, Desire?"

"For myself?"—I looked down at my white dress, almost the only thing I had which could pass muster anywhere but at Chesterfield; and yet the sense of want could not get any prominence in my mind. "I suppose I ought to have a few things," I went on. "My old straw bonnet is hardly fit to go about with you."

"You will learn some day that the wearer makes the bonnet," Mr. Iredell said with a contented expression.

That satisfied me. If he did not care, I did not care certainly; and I remembered Olive's words once spoken, that Mr. Iredell did not notice how people dressed. I had not believed them at the time; and I found now, the next day, that I had been quite right in not believing them. I found another thing; that I was myself the centre of the day's business. The Chesterfield things were attended to, well and duly, no doubt; yet that was done as

it were by the way; and Mr. Iredell's special pleasure and care were expended in supplying me with every imaginable thing which I could be even supposed to want. He knew, doubtless, that my little old trunk did not hold much. That trunk was destined now to go back to Chesterfield with stores for Arethusa and Mrs. Quick; and not one but two magnificent leather packing cases were provided for the accommodation of my belongings. We did an enormous amount of business that day. I found we were served with a quick readiness and submissiveness which ensured us against unnecessary loss of time; Mr. Iredell had a quiet way of doubling my orders, which was impressive; and at any rate, without that, it was enough for him to shew himself anywhere to gain immediate and obsequious attention. My old bonnet, in such company, fared as well as if it had been a coronet. But Mr. Iredell's attention came round to that too, in due course, and he took me where it was to be exchanged for another; or rather, for others. And I found he was not easily suited. I would have made a short business of it, to spare his time; but that would not do. I was getting nothing splendid or showy; it made no difference; I was made to try on one bonnet after another, till those were found which perfectly suited his taste and which perfectly fitted me. I learned a lesson, quietly, in that milliner's shop. Indeed I never thought otherwise, but that a person so fond of all the refinements of beauty and propriety would care

for them also in his wife and in all that concerned her.

Do what we could, however, we were not able to accomplish all our business in one day. We must take part of another; and so came a queer rencounter.

The evening of this day was spent in writing notes to go to Chesterfield, whither the various packages had been despatched by express. Happy writing! I ought to have been very tired; but pleasure I think prevents that sometimes. I wrote notes busily, and Mr Iredell directed them; distracting me a little, I confess, by talking the while. In the midst of this, came one of the waiters of the hotel with a card on a salver which he brought to me. I read, bewildered, the name of "*Mrs. St. Ives*"—and handed the card to Mr. Iredell. He studied it a minute..

"Is the lady here?" he asked.

"Yes, sir. In the parlour, sir."

"Will you see her, Desire? It is a very unwarrantable intrusion!" Mr. Iredell said in a low voice. "Will you receive her?"

"If you please," I said. "Yes. I do not care. It is only her way."

"I will go to her," said Mr. Iredell. "Perhaps there is some mistake. Sit still; I will bring her to you, if necessary."

I guessed there was no mistake. Ernestine was following her old rule, of doing what she had a mind to do, irrespective of the rights of the case or the rights of other people. I was more amused than

anything else. Presently I heard voices, the door opened, and in she came, Mr. Iredell following her.

It is impossible to describe, the air of mingled grace, graciousness, and—spitefulness, with which she came towards me. On her good behaviour, as she was, and afraid of betraying herself, yes, and wishing to practise ingratiation; but clever as she is, she could not manage everything at once. Her black eyes snapped, while her mouth smiled.

"I knew it," she exclaimed,—"I knew it! I knew it was you. I was certain of it. I saw you once, and thought I might be mistaken; then the next time I saw your bonnet, and I knew it could be nobody but you."

"Which bonnet?" said Mr. Iredell.

Mrs. St. Ives faced him with a look of such doubtful perplexity that I smiled. I could not help it.

"Has she got more than one?" she asked.

It was Mr. Iredell's turn now, and he laughed.

"You see, I know Desire Burgoyne," she went on.

"You mean, you have known her."

"Exactly. I hope she is going to let me know her in the future. What are all these? cards? Are you sending out cards?"

"No," said I.

"Does Mrs. Bowdoin know? What ever made you steal a march upon everybody in this way, Mr. Iredell?"

"It seems that you do not know me as well as you know my wife," he answered.

"Your wife!" she repeated. "Desire Burgoyne your wife!"—and she said it with the oddest accent, in which all was not concealed that she wished concealed. "I cannot believe it now I have seen it. Desire is too good for you, Mr. Iredell."

He bowed.

"It is too much for one house. It is out of proportion. Desire ought to have married another sort of man, that needed her to keep him straight. You don't need anybody. I consider you have done somebody a great wrong, Mr. Iredell."

"Unconsciously."

"I thought you were going to Egypt."

"I am."

"Are you going to take her?"

"Yes."

"O dear! I wish I was your bridesmaid, Desire, and was going along! But you ought not to take her to Egypt, Mr. Iredell; she ought to go to Paris, and Rome."

"I mean to take her to Rome."

"But what are you going to Egypt for, at all?"

"A mingling of business and pleasure. Egypt is one of the most enjoyable lands to visit, if you go in the right way. May I ask—How did you know we were here?"

"Your name is in the book."

"Yes; but may I ask further, how you came to find out that fact?"

"Why, I looked for it," said Ernestine bravely. "I told you, I saw Desire—I saw her at Consta-

ble's; there was such a crowd I could not get near her. I saw you too, a minute after; and that raised a fear in me; and when I got home I looked in the papers, at the lists of arrivals."

Mr. Iredell's lips twitched suspiciously.

"Of course, I know I have no business to be here," Ernestine went on. "But you know, I must take a great interest, Mr. Iredell; and you have known me a long time, and I thought you would forgive me."

"What did you think Desire would do?"

If Ernestine had dared, she would have made I saw, one of her old speeches. It quivered on her lips; but she did not dare. She hesitated, putting down the impromptu that was so ready, and finally uttered a very different set of words.

"I thought I knew Mrs. Iredell well enough to trust that she would forgive me. If she does not, I will ask her pardon."

"I do—" I said smiling. "There is no need."

"And will you let me come and see you, when you get back from Egypt? sometimes?"

"Certainly. With pleasure."

"Then I'm satisfied," said she rising; "and I've done all I can do in one evening call. Good bye. Please forgive me, Mr. Iredell."

She offered her mouth to kiss me. It was the first time certainly; but I accepted the kiss cordially, and the lady tripped away. I knew her eyes had run all over me, while she was talking to Mr. Iredell, examining me from top to toe; and though

my dress was simple, I knew too that, mistress of the art as she was, she had given it her silent approval. I had put on one of the fresh muslins Mr. Iredell had got for me that day, with a knot of lace at my throat which also had not been in my possession a day before. Mrs. St. Ives had never been so plainly attired in her life; and yet I had a secret satisfaction in knowing that she confessed I looked as Mr. Iredell's wife ought to look. Mr. Iredell came back seeming amused.

"You have made a conquest, Desire," he said.

"I think not."

"But you were quite right in letting her come in. It is good never to lose a thread of influence by which you hold any one. You never can tell what, some time, a little thread may draw after it. I have such a thread of influence with her, I think; and now at least, so have you."

I saw Mr. Iredell understood the little woman.

At the Mansion. July 17.

MR. IREDELL would not get to Philadelphia late Saturday evening. So we staid over the Sunday where we were, and took an early train Monday. The plan was to rest in Poulteney Place during the heat of the day, and drive out to the Mansion when it grew cooler towards evening. For the weather continued very warm. I had

shrunk a little, in my thoughts, from Poulteney Place.

Mr. Iredell had written, and everything was in order for us; Sam waiting at the station with the carriage, and Harry ready to open the door with a face of delight. Mr. Iredell led me at once up stairs to the rooms prepared for me; not Olive's room, of which I was glad; these were in a different part of the house. Here Mr. Iredell took me in his arms and gave me a welcome, grave and glad, which I could hardly answer in any way without a sob, and did not answer at all. It is good that silence speaks sometimes. When he left me, I sat down to get rid of a tear or two which came in the midst of my gladness, perhaps because of my gladness.

I think Mr. Iredell had been willing to put me at once at home in my place, and so had arranged to spend part of a day in Poulteney Place. His manner seemed to tell me that. And I owned that he was right now; right to bring me to my lovely home and make me feel that it was mine, before I went anywhere else; my two homes, indeed, this and the Mansion. But I was glad not to be in Olive's room; and these, full of comfort as they were, were full also of the old time quaint pleasantness in which I delighted. My boxes were brought up immediately; and I got rid of travelling dust, dressed carefully, and went down to the dining room. I had got a lesson in New York about Mr. Iredell's notions of dress.

We had the most beautiful luncheon time. Harry had done his part, even to dressing the table with flowers, and waited upon us with a glee that amused me. And Mr. Iredell let none but the fairest mental and spiritual fragrance fill the time.

He did not talk only; and not only were every tone and movement full of welcome to me; they were full also of the tenderest watchful care of me. Perhaps he guessed, that back of everything else I could not forget Olive. It was a minor chord which I heard ever and again sounding in the bursts of my music. So while he made me eat broiled chicken, and gave me ice and Mansion raspberries, he kept up a constant bright talk. He asked me what I had done in the reading line, for some time back?

I confessed, not much. "A little Hebrew and German."

"Hebrew! How much do you know of that?"

"Not much, Mr. Iredell."

"What have you read? or can you read?"

"I read the Old Testament."

"Enjoy it?"

"O, more than I can tell you!"

"Suppose you give me lessons."

"I!"—I cried. "Give you lessons!"

Mr. Iredell helped me to ice and remarked that perhaps then he could be helpful to me in the other thing.

"In German?" said I. "O I want help. I can-

not pronounce it at all; I had nobody to teach me. I can read it a little."

"To have full enjoyment of a language you must be able to write it. Then it is a bargain? How would you like to study Greek also?"

"O Max, there is nothing I want so much to do!"

"That will give us good work for our voyage out, don't you think so? You and I will have to study the Bible together a great deal; so it stands us in hand to get access to all the help we can."

I was so filled with delight at this prospect, that I could not speak at all for a few minutes.

"Mr. Iredell, what are *you* doing lately?" I began then. "I have not heard you say anything about your own, special work."

"You will hear enough about it," he said.

"When are you going to begin?" said I laughing. "And what will you have for me to do? I suppose I can help?"

A look that was very heart-warming came to me here.

"You will hear enough about that too. Just now you have got to learn Greek and teach Hebrew. Some people would think that was enough."

"But it does not interfere with other work."

"No. But I believe I shall. I think I will give you a large dose of play in the first place."

"But, Max, seriously, I do not think anything is much better than work,—the sort I mean."

"No. But sometimes play is better, just to en-

able one for work. We are going to play, Desire."

"I believe," said I laughing, "that you have a thread of business twisted up with the play, and that I shall find it out."

"So I have," said he. "I want to examine personally into the condition, and needs, and possibilities, of native schools in Egypt and on Lebanon. Without seeing with my own eyes, I cannot tell what to do."

It made me secretly glad to hear this. I said nothing.

"I have got work preparing for you," he went on again with a smile. "I am building a house of rest for tired women."

"O that is delightful," I said. "Where, Max?"

"On the sea-shore. At Cape May."

"Building? Then it is not done?"

"No. It will be ready for occupation next spring, by the time we come home."

"That must be one of the most needed things," I remarked; "here, in cities."

"The want of it meets me continually. I find at every turn cases of people who need such a place of rest; people with strength worn out, nerves disordered; overworked people, convalescent people; people nearly crazy with care. What they all need is rest, and refreshment, and change; good food, and good air, and nothing to do for awhile; and if sea-bathing too, why so much the better. I send such cases sometimes into the country or to the

sea-side; but it is not possible to find places for the hundredth part of them. For men I built a house some years ago; now I am getting ready one for women; and when it is done I shall make it over into your charge."

"You will have to tell me what to do."

"See that all goes right. But in the first place, I shall want you to help me in furnishing and arranging the house. We need something besides lodging and sea-air; something to minister to the higher nature, and encourage it to make an effort to lift itself from the dust, to which very often want and trouble have depressed it. So the furnishing of the house becomes a matter of a good deal of importance."

"What delightful work!" I could not help saying.

"It will be delightful to have the right sort of place to send all these people to, as fast as we find them. The house will be arranged with every necessary comfort; and then, it must be made bright with chromos and engravings on the walls, and neat furniture; and there must be a good stock of books."

"When will it be ready to furnish?"

"Next spring, I hope."

"And what do you want me to do, Max? when it is in working order, I mean."

"Keep it so," he said smiling. "Every such establishment needs constant looking after. I have the right sort of housekeeper ready, I think; but you and I must know by the evidence of our own

eyes that she does her duty. We might run down now and then and spend a day or two there, might we not? That would give opportunity for several sorts of things."

I suppose my face answered, for Mr. Iredell smiled at me.

"It will be best, Desire, to demand a small payment weekly from each visiter. That keeps up the feeling of independence, and makes them enjoy the time better. When we see reason for it we can always privately supply the means for this payment.'

I took the full sweetness of the plural pronoun, and I believe, in tasting it, forgot to make a word of answer.

We were prevented from driving out to the Mansion that evening. There came up a thunder-storm, followed by such heavy rain that going out was not to be thought of. We passed the evening in the beloved old library, part of the time reading German hymns; Mr. Iredell making me read, interpreting, explaining, discussing, till our talk grew into a most delicious mental feast. Specially we dwelt upon two or three hymns—Paul Gerhardt's

"Nun ruhen alle Wälder"—

Lavater's

"O Jesus Christus, wachs in mir!
Und alles andre schwinde!"

and

"Mein Jesu, wie du willst."

The next morning I got a chance to ask my

question; that I had been keeping on my heart, but could never bring out before. It was after breakfast; I was all ready for setting out to go to the Mansion, but Mr. Iredell had found some business which made a slight delay. The morning was so fresh after last night's shower that the delay was no matter. While I waited for Mr. Iredell, I wandered about in the house; went up to look at the old room I used to occupy, opened the door of Olive's and went in for a minute. Coming back at last to my own room, I spied in the upper hall a little packing case which I recognized; it was my St. Cecilia, safely come from Chesterfield. I seized it and carried it to my room; got some tool from Harry with which I could open it; and presently I had unwrapped the little marble from its enfoldings and it lay on the table before me.

I sat down and looked at it and thought. Of all the days of my life with which it had to do, from the first time I saw it until now. Remembering pain, and submission, and the goodness of the Lord, and the faithfulness of his promises; and thinking of Olive with a great stricture at my heart. I was not crying, I think; but I did not hear Mr. Iredell come in, till I felt his hands on my shoulders.

"What are you doing?" he asked softly.

"Looking, and thinking,—" I said. "It is so beautiful! Is it not, 'Mein Jesu, wie du willst,' in marble?"

"Or rather, 'wie du's gewollt.'"

I did not know quite enough German to understand this. I said so.

"It is in the past tense," said Mr. Iredell. "It looks back. The hymn looks forward. Both are the motto of the Christian life, Desire."

Did I not know that? I was silent. I had risen, and Mr. Iredell was holding me in his arms.

"I thought once you did not care for that marble," he remarked.

"You know now?—" I said hastily.

"I know," he said gravely. "Olive told me. She told me all."

"Max," I said, turning to look in his face, "do you forgive her?"

He kissed me very fondly once or twice before he spoke. "I forgive her, my Desire, as you do."

And by the clear, grave utterance, I knew it was true.

THE END.

MARCH, 1887.

BOOKS

PUBLISHED BY

ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,

530 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

THE CRISIS OF MISSIONS; or, The Voice out of the Cloud. By the Rev. ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D. 16mo $1.25

"It is as fascinating as a novel, and yet overflowing with facts that make one wonder how it can be possible that such great progress has been made in missions, even during the recent years, and he not have known more of it. This book can but stimulate the followers of Christ to greater love for, and more earnest efforts in, missions." — *Christian Work.*

"This is a book for every Christian to read with prayer and a sincere desire to know his personal duty in this great and glorious work." — *New York Observer.*

"In the little volume before us, the history of missions is unrolled as a scroll, the marvellous providences of God are traced in letters which glow with the intensity of the writer's convictions, the trumpet-call of God's providences to the Christian world is sounded so loud and clear as to reach, one would think, the dullest ear." — *Baptist Herald.*

"One of the most important books to the cause of Foreign Missions — and through them to Home Missions also — which ever has been written. It should be in every library and every household. It should be read, studied, taken to heart, and prayed over." — *Congregationalist.*

***A. L. O. E. LIBRARY.**

50 vols., 16mo, in a neat wooden case, *net* 28.00

"All these stories have the charm and pure Christian character which have made the name of A. L. O. E. dear to thousands of homes." — *Lutheran.*

ARNOT, Rev. William.

On the Parables. 12mo 1.75

Church in the House; or, Lessons on the Acts of the Apostles. 12mo 1.50

BERNARD, T. D.

The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament. 12mo $1.25

"The style is absolutely perfect. A broad, deep stream of fresh thought, in language as clear as crystal, flows through the whole devout, instructive, quickening, and inspiring work. Simply as a model of style, every preacher might profitably study it. . . . This volume makes the New Testament a new book to me." — *Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D.D.*

BICKERSTETH, Rev. E. H.

Yesterday, To-day, and Forever. A Poem. Pocket edition, $0.50; 16mo, $1.00; 12mo 1.50

"If any poem is destined to endure in the companionship of Milton's hitherto matchless epic, we believe it will be 'Yesterday, To-day, and Forever.'" — *London Globe.*

BLUNT'S Coincidences and Paley's Horæ Paulinæ. 12mo 1.50

BONAR, Horatius, D.D.

Hymns of Faith and Hope. 3 vols. 16mo	2.25
Bible Thoughts and Themes. 6 vols. 12mo	12.00
Way of Peace	0.50
Way of Holiness	0.60
Night of Weeping	0.50
Morning of Joy	0.60
Follow the Lamb	0.40
How shall I go to God?	0.40

BOWES, Rev. G. S.

Scripture its own Illustrator. 12mo	1.50
Information and Illustration. 12mo	1.50

BRODIE, Emily.

Jean Lindsay, The Vicar's Daughter	1.25
Dora Hamilton's Choice. 12mo	1.25
Elsie Gordon. 12mo	1.25
Uncle Fred's Shilling. 12mo	1.25
Lonely Jack. 12mo	1.25
Ruth's Rescue. 16mo	0.50
Nora Clinton. 12mo	1.25
The Sea Gull's Nest. 16mo	0.60
Norman and Elsie. 12mo	1.25
Five Minutes too Late	1.25
East and West	0.60
His Guardian Angel	1.25

CHARLESWORTH, Miss M. L.

Ministering Children. 12mo	1.50
" " 16mo	1.00
Sequel to Ministering Children. 12mo	1.50
" " " 16mo	1.00

CHARLESWORTH, Miss M. L., *continued.*

Oliver of the Mill. 12mo $1.00

Dorothy Cope, containing "The Old Looking-Glass" and "Broken Looking-Glass." 12mo 1.50

CUYLER, Rev. T. L.

Pointed Papers. 12mo 1.50

Thought Hives. 12mo 1.50

From Nile to Norway 1.50

Empty Crib. 24mo 1.00

Cedar Christian. 18mo 0.75

Stray Arrows. 18mo 0.60

God's Light on Dark Clouds. Flexible, red edges . . . 0.75

"In this beautiful little volume the author presents a grateful offering to the 'desponding and bereaved.' . . . He offers to others what he has tested for himself. The book is written out of a full heart and a vivid experience." — *Presbyterian Review.*

***D'AUBIGNÉ, Dr. Merle.**

*History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century. 5 vols., 12mo, cloth, in a box 4.50

*History of the Reformation in the Time of Calvin. 8 vols., 12mo, cloth, in a box 8.00

"The work is now complete; and these later volumes, together with the original five, form a library relating to the Reformation of incalculable value and of intense interest. The pen of this master of history gave a charm to everything that he touched." — *New York Observer.*

**A very cheap edition of* Reformation in the Sixteenth Century. 5 vols. in one, 890 pages, cloth 1.00

DICKSON, Rev. Alexander, D.D.

All about Jesus. 12mo 2.00

Beauty for Ashes. 12mo 2.00

"His book is a 'bundle of myrrh,' and will be specially enjoyed by those who are in trouble." — *Rev. Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

"Luscious as a honeycomb, with sweetness drawn from God's Word." — *Rev. Dr. Cuyler.*

DRINKWATER, Jennie M.

Only Ned. 12mo 1.25

Not Bread Alone. 12mo 1.25

Fred and Jeanie. 12mo 1.25

Tessa Wadsworth's Discipline. 12mo 1.50

Rue's Helps. 12mo 1.50

Electa; A Story. 12mo 1.50

Fifteen. 12mo 1.50

Bek's First Corner. 12mo 1.50

Miss Prudence. 12mo 1.50

The Story of Hannah. 12mo 1.50

That Quisset House 1.50

Isobel's Between-Times 1.50

EDWARDS, Jonathan.

*Works. In 4 vols. 8vo $6.00

"I consider Jonathan Edwards the greatest of the sons of men." — *Robert Hall.*

FRASER, Dr. D.

Synoptical Lectures on the Books of Holy Scripture. New and revised edition. 2 vols. 12mo 4.50

"The plan is to give a general view of the scope and contents of each book in the Bible. It is designed not for professional students alone, but for all educated Christians. The careful reader will gain from its pages clear ideas of the arrangement, subject-matter, and salient features of the Sacred Scriptures." — *New York Observer.*

GIBERNE, Agnes.

Aimee. A Tale of James II. 12mo 1.50
The Curate's Home. 16mo 1.25
Floss Silverthorn. 16mo 1.25
Coulyng Castle. 16mo 1.50
Muriel Bertram. 12mo 1.50
The Sun, Moon, and Stars. 12mo 1.50
The World's Foundations; or, Geology for Beginners. 12mo 1.50
Through the Linn. 16mo 1.25
Sweetbriar. 12mo 1.50
Duties and Duties. 16mo 1.25
Jacob Witherby. 16mo 0.60
Decima's Promise. 12mo 1.25
Twilight Talks. 16mo 0.75
Kathleen. 12mo 1.50
Daily Evening Rest. 18mo 1.00
Beryl and Pearl. 12mo 1.50
Old Umbrellas. 12mo 0.90
Among the Stars; or, Wonders in the Sky. 12mo . . . 1.50
Madge Hardwicke 1.00
Father Aldur: a Water Story 1.50

GREEN, Prof. Wm. Henry, D.D.

The Argument of the Book of Job Unfolded. 12mo . . 1.75

"That ancient composition, so marvellous in beauty and so rich in philosophy, is here treated in a thoroughly analytical manner, and new depths and grander proportions of the divine original portrayed. It is a book to stimulate research." — *Methodist Recorder.*

Moses and the Prophets. 12mo, cloth 1.00

"It has impressed me as one of the most thorough and conclusive pieces of apologetics that has been composed for a long time. The critic confines himself to the positions laid down by Smith, and, without being diverted by any side issues or bringing in any other views of other theorists, replies to those positions in a style that carries conviction." — *Professor W. G. T. Shedd, D.D.*

The Hebrew Feasts. 12mo 1.50

GUTHRIE, Thomas, D.D.

Life and Works of Thomas Guthrie, D.D. New, neat, and cheap edition in 11 vols. 12mo $10.00

Life, 2 vols.; Gospel in Ezekiel; Inheritance of the Saints; Parables; Speaking to the Heart; Man and the Gospel; Way to Life; Studies of Character; The City and Ragged Schools; Out of Harness. (The volumes sold separately at $1.00 each.)

"His style is a model of Anglo-Saxon, strong, plain, rhythmical, and earnest. It is music to read his rich and ringing sentences, all on fire of the Gospel. His sermons are more terse and educating than Spurgeon's, broader and deeper than Beecher's, and vivid, keen, convincing, and uplifting as only Guthrie's own can be." — *Methodist Protestant.*

HAMILTON, Edward J., D.D.

The Human Mind. 8vo 3.00
Mental Science. 12mo 2.00

HAMLIN, Cyrus, D.D.

Among the Turks. 12mo 1.50

HANNA, William, D.D.

Life of Christ. 3 vols. 12mo 3.00

HAUSSER, Ludwig.

Period of the Reformation. New edition 2.50

This admirable résumé of the History of the Reformation in Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden, and England, by the late eminent German historian, Professor Hausser, offers in compact form information which has otherwise to be sought for over a wide field of literature.

*HENRY'S Commentary on the Bible.

3 vols. 4to, cloth 8.00
*Another edition, in large type, 5 vols., 4to, cloth . . . 15.00
*Still another edition, 9 vols., 8vo, cloth 20.00

Persons desiring to purchase this Commentary can have a circular sent them without charge giving a specimen page from each of these editions, by sending us their address.

"King of Bible explorers yet." — *Cuyler.*

"First among the mighty, for general usefulness, we are bound to mention Matthew Henry." — *Spurgeon.*

"Sparkles with jewels of wisdom and incisive humor." — *Rev. Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

"Taking it as a whole, and as adapted to every class of readers, this Commentary may be said to combine more excellence than any work of the kind that was ever written in any language." — *Dr. Archibald Alexander.*

"There is nothing to be compared with old Matthew Henry's Commentary for pungent and practical applications of the teachings of the text." — *Sunday-School Times.*

HODGE, A. A., D.D.

Outlines of Theology. Revised and enlarged edition. 8vo $3.00

"At its first publication in 1860, this work attracted much attention, and ever since it has had a large sale, and been carefully studied both in this country and in Great Britain. It has been translated into Welsh and modern Greek, and has been used as a text-book in several theological schools." — *Presbyterian Banner.*

HODGE, Charles, D.D.

On Romans. 8vo	3.00
On Romans. Abridged. 12mo	1.75
On Ephesians. 12mo	1.75
On Corinthians. 2 vols. 12mo	3.50

"Most valuable. With no writer do we more fully agree. The more we use Hodge, the more we value him. This applies to all his Commentaries." — *Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

HOLT, Emily Sarah.

HISTORICAL TALES.

Isoult Barry. 12mo	1.50
Robin Tremayne. 12mo	1.50
The Well in the Desert	1.25
Ashcliffe Hall. 12mo	1.50
Verena. A Tale. 12mo	1.50
The White Rose of Langley. 12mo	1.50
Imogen. 12mo	1.50
Clare Avery. 12mo	1.50
Lettice Eden. 12mo	1.50
For the Master's Sake	1.00
Margery's Son. 12mo	1.50
Lady Sybil's Choice. 12mo	1.50
The Maiden's Lodge. 12mo	1.25
Earl Hubert's Daughter	1.50
Joyce Morrell's Harvest. 12mo	1.50
At ye Grene Griffin. 12mo	1.00
Red and White. 12mo	1.50
Not for Him. 12mo	1.25
Wearyholme. 12mo	1.50
John De Wicliffe. 12mo	1.25
The Lord Mayor of London	1.50
The Lord of the Marches	1.25
A Tangled Web	1.50
In All Time of our Tribulation	1.50

JACOBUS, Melancthon W., D.D.

NOTES, CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

Genesis. 12mo	1.50
Matthew and Mark	1.50
Luke and John. 12mo	1.50
Acts. 12mo	1.50

RETURN TO ⟶ **CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT**
202 Main Library

LOAN PERIOD 1 **HOME USE**	2	3
4	5	6

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS

RENEWALS AND RECHARGES MAY BE MADE 4 DAYS PRIOR TO DUE DATE
LOAN PERIODS ARE 1-MONTH, 3-MONTHS, AND [illegible]
RENEWALS: CALL (415) 642-3405

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

MAR 03 1990

AUTO DISC APR 03 '90

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
FORM NO. DD6, 60m, 1/83 BERKELEY, CA 94720

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C022684145